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John H. Holliday: Editor Indianapolis News 1869-1877

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JOHN H. HOLLIDAY

EDITOR

INDIANAPOLIS NEWS

1869 - 1877

by

JOHN T. BARNETT

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
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CHAPTER I

JOHN HAMPDEN HOLLIDAY

Hoosier born John Hampden Holliday, Civil War soldier, publisher, and civic benefactor grew to manhood in the city of his birth, Indianapolis, and there came to be recognized as one of the foremost pioneer journalists of his time.

Born May 31, 1846, to Reverend William A. and Lucia Shaw Holliday, young Holliday came from a background of pioneer stock which was to shape his philosophies and destiny in years to come. His grandfather, Samuel Holliday, came to Indiana in 1812, four years before the territory became a state. The paternal grandfather had entered what was then the Indiana Territory from Ohio where he had resided for a few years after leaving Gray's Run, Kentucky, his birthplace.[1] He was a sturdy valiant soul, well fortified for grappling with the wilderness; a man who wielded marked influence in his community as a citizen of broad mentality and distinctive individuality.[2]

The Reverend Holliday, young John's father, was a man of intellectual attainment who had gained preeminence as one of the ablest and most devoted pioneer clergymen of the Presbyterian Church in Indiana.[3]

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[1]Personal conversation of writer with Mr. Holliday's two daughters, Mrs. Elizabeth Hitz and Mrs. Lucia Macbeth in Indianapolis, April 23, 1947.

[2]Jacob Piatt Dunn, Greater Indianapolis (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1910), Vol. 2, p. 1006.

[3]Ibid.

Graduating from Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, Reverend Holliday completed a course in theology at the Seminary (School) of Princeton, New Jersey, and was ordained to the ministery. In 1833 he became pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Indianapolis. Also engaging in teaching, he taught many of the men of the second generation of Indianapolis.[4] Reverend Holliday at one time was a professor at Hanover College, but was compelled by sickness to give up this activity.[5] He died in 1866, but Mrs. Holliday lived to see her son found the Indianapolis News and make of it a successful evening newspaper. She died in 1881.

John Hampden Holliday received all of his early education in the common schools of Indianapolis in the decade of the '50's.[6] Furthering his academic studies he enrolled at the Northwestern Christian University, later named Butler University, where he continued as a student for four years. He later enrolled in Hanover College, Hanover, Indiana, and was graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree as a member of the class of 1864.[7] In 1867 that school conferred upon him the Master of Arts degree and he was made a member of the Board of Trustees, a position that he held for forty-five years.[8]

It was shortly before his graduation that young Holliday, then eighteen, answered the call of President Abraham Lincoln for troops to defend the Union and enlisted for one hundred days in the One Hundred and Thirty-Seventh Indiana Volunteer Infantry. During his period of enlistment he served with his comman in middle Tennessee. Upon the

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[4]Ibid.

[5]Jacob Piatt Dunn, Indiana and Indianans (Chicago: The American Historical Society, 1919), p. 1225.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Indianapolis News, October 21, 1921.

expiration of his term he re-enlisted for a period of three years in the Seventieth Infantry, but was almost immediately rejected on account of light physique.[9]

Following his graduation, upon return from service, Holliday "read a little law" but soon gave up the idea of becoming a lawyer in favor of a career in journalism.[10]

In an interview published in the Indianapolis News at the time he sold the paper, Mr. Holliday described his entry into the field of journalism by saying, "I began my newspaper experience in the Spring of 1866 but I had done some work in the counting room of the Indianapolis Journal and I had some knowledge of the business department."[11]

Mr. Holliday had in mind his first position on the editorial staff of the Indianapolis Gazette and later positions on the Indianapolis Herald and the Indianapolis Sentinel.[12] It was while on the staff of the Sentinel that he became "local editor" as it was then called.[13] In addition to his positions held with the three Indianapolis papers, the youthful Civil War veteran became local correspondent for the New York Herald, the Cincinnati Gazette, the Chicago Journal, and the Chicago Republican.[14]

Holliday was twenty-three years of age when he entered upon what

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[9]Ibid.

[10]Cumback and Maynard, Men of Progress (Indianapolis: Indianapolis Sentinel Press, 1899), "John H. Holliday," p. 474.

[11]Indianapolis News, December 6, 1894.

[12]The Graphic News, April 24, 1886. See also.
Charles Dye, Some Torch Bearers in Indiana (Indianapolis: Hollenbeck Press, 1917), Vol. 19, p. 3, Indiana Biography.

[13]Indianapolis News, October 21, 1921.

[14]Jacob Piatt Dunn, Greater Indianapolis (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1910), Vol. 2, p. 1006.

is now recognized by journalists as one of the most notable undertakings of his time, the founding of the Indianapolis News, an evening paper. "His was a bold but well considered enterprise and he broke the path which was later to become a straight and well trodden road."[15] With the help of his friend, Richard J. Bright, then proprietor of the Indianapolis Sentinel, a Democratic morning paper, Mr. Holliday founded the Indianapolis News December 6, 1869, by publishing an extra edition containing news of President Grant's first message to Congress, a "scoop" over other papers of the city.[16]

The new paper was to have the distinction of being the first two-cent paper established west of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.[17] The policy of the paper was predetermined by the definite views of its founder. It was to be an independent paper, unsensational, and was to serve the public, "not favoring the patronage of those who would use the public to serve their own ends."[18]

This newest entry into the field of Hoosier journalism provided the expanding city of Indianapolis with an evening paper "free from vacillation marked by exalted public spirit and regulated by principle rather than expediency."[19]

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[15]Indianapolis News, October 21, 1921.

[16]Ibid. December 7, 1869, date of the first regular issue of the News is recognized as the founding date by current staff members of the paper.

[17]The Graphic News, April 24, 1886. At the time the only two-cent newspaper off the Atlantic coast was the Pittsburgh Leader, which had been started three months previous.

[18]Dye, op. cit., p. 3.

[19]Jacob Piatt Dunn, Greater Indianapolis (Chicago: -----) p. 1006.

The growth of the Indianapolis News under the management of Mr. Holliday, advanced the paper into the ranks of the leading dailies of the Middle West.

At the age of forty-six, when he had built the Indianapolis News into a great property, Mr. Holliday made the decision to sell the paper and retire from the work in which he had been successful. On May 12, 1892, when his health had failed him, the paper was sold.[20] However, in May 1893, Mr. Holliday re-entered the business world in the Hoosier capital when he effected the organization of the Union Trust Company of Indianapolis. Under his guiding hand the company was incorporated with a capital of $600,000. The former publisher became the first president of the financial institution, a position he continued to hold until 1899 when he resigned to join William J. Richards in a new journalistic enterprise.[21] The two men established the Indianapolis Press and the former owner of the Indianapolis News became editor, a position he held until 1901 when the paper was consolidated with the News. In June 1901, the Hoosier journalist once again became president of the Union Trust Company in which he had retained considerable interest as the principal stockholder. He continued to act as president of this company until 1916 at which time he became chairman of its board of directors.

On December 21, 1916, Mr. Holliday, together with Mrs. Holliday, the former Evaline M. Rieman of Baltimore, whom he had married November 4, 1875, announced the donation of their country estate on White River, north of Crows' Nest, near Indianapolis, to the Hoosier capital for use

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[20] Indianapolis News, October 21, 1921.

[21] Jacob Piatt Dunn, Greater Indianapolis (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1910), Vol. 2, p. 1006.

as a park. The Holliday estate was composed of eighty acres of landscaped grounds with one fourth mile of frontage along the river. The gift was to be held three years after the death of the last survivor, Mr. Holliday or his wife, and was then to be given to the city.[22]

To Mr. and Mrs. Holliday seven children were born. They included Alexander R., a civil engineer of Indianapolis; Mrs. Lucia Macbeth of Los Angeles, California; Mrs. Evelyn M. Patterson of Evanston, Illinois; John H. Jr., a mechanical engineer who died during World War I ; Mrs. Mary H. Mitchell of New York City; and Mrs. Elizabeth H. Hitz and Mrs. Kathryn H. Daniels, both of Indianapolis.[23]

Following the death of his son, John H. Holliday, Jr., the Hoosier publisher made a gift of $25,000 to Emerich Manual Training High School in Indianapolis requesting the establishment of a scholarship as a memorial to his son. The young man, a first Lieutenant in the United States Army, died December 23, 1917, while on duty in Washington D. C.

Mr. Holliday died December 20, 1921, at the age of seventy-five after suffering a paralytic stroke.[24] Funeral services were held in the First Presbyterian Church of Indianapolis, the church of his father, with the Reverend M. L. Haines, pastor emeritus, and the Reverend Mathew R. Smith, pastor, conducting the services.[25]

During his life the publisher had been a Director of McCormick

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[22]Rabb and Herschell, Indianapolis and Marion County (History of Indiana), Vol. 4, John H. Holliday.

[23]Ibid.

[24]Indianapolis News, October 21, 1921.

[25]Indianapolis News, October 24, 1921.

Theological Seminary of Chicago, Trustee of the Presbyterian Synod of Indiana, a member of the Board of Trade in Indianapolis, a member of the Board of State Charities, President of the Indianapolis Charity Organization Society, a member of the Thomas Post, Grand Army of the Republic; a member of the Commercial Club, the Phi Beta Kappa and Phi Gamma Delta fraternities, and the thirty-third degree member of the Supreme Council of Scottish Rite Masonry.[26]

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[26]Jacob Piatt Dunn, Indiana and Indianans (Chicago: The American Historical Society, 1919), p. 1225.

CHAPTER II

THE FOUNDING OF THE INDIANAPOLIS NEWS

The launching of an independent newspaper in the late 1860's was no small task even for the most experienced of journalists, so when twenty-three year old John H. Holliday announced his intention of establishing a new Indianapolis daily evening paper, with only six months of editorial experience to his credit, there were many sceptics who shook their heads. The field appeared to be unpromising at a time when every evening paper started had either died or was in a state of decline.[1]

With the establishment of the Indianapolis News young Holliday inaugurated the independent newspaper movement in Indiana, a movement which "avowedly takes an active part in all political issues and makes a virtue of the 'fopping' which so excites the scorn of the staunch partizan."[2] The young journalist had given careful study to the idea which was to enter him into competition with two other Indianapolis newspapers, both high-priced and party organs.[3]

In his own words years later, Mr. Holliday said of his new

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[1] Indianapolis News, December 6, 1894.

[2] George S. Cottman, "The Early Newspapers of Indiana" (Indiana Magazine of History, 1906), Vol. 2, March-December, p. 113.

[3] Indianapolis News, December 6, 1894. The papers were the Democratic Indianapolis Sentinel and the Republican Indianapolis Daily Journal, both morning papers.

enterprise:

> My plans were long considered and well laid. I thought them over for at least three years, studying papers of other places and getting all possible information about the business. My idea was to make a newspaper at a low price - one that would go into homes and be attractive to the family. It was to have courage, honesty, and common sense. Above all it was to be clean and independent, uninfluenced by counting room contributions.[4]

(Mr. Holliday was making reference to his policy of not allowing the advertising revenue to affect the editorial policy of his paper.)

Bold of thought and with a mind to experiment, Holliday revived a pre-Civil War newspaper ambition, the publication of a low-priced paper. Previous to the start of the conflict several cheap papers had been established, but the high cost of materials such as white paper, particularly during the war period, had resulted in their failure.[5] The young publisher reasoned, and rightly so, that an evening paper could be published cheaper than a morning paper because of the relative cheap day labor costs as compared to night work necessary for morning editions.[6]

Opportunity to publish his two-cent independent evening paper presented itself to John H. Holliday late in 1869. As has been mentioned, the young journalist received the encouragement needed from Richard J. Bright, editor of the then powerful Democratic Indianapolis Sentinel, a morning newspaper.[7] Believing that he had nothing to fear in the competition of an evening paper, Editor Bright offered young Holliday space

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[4] Ibid.

[5] Cottman, op. cit., p. 113.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Indianapolis News, December 7, 1929.

in the Sentinel Building on the second and third floors.[8] In addition Mr. Bright agreed to print Holliday's new paper, the Indianapolis News.

Plans were made for the first issue of the News to be published December 7, 1869, but unexpectedly the opportunity presented itself to the youthful editor for a "scoop" on the morning papers.[9] On Monday, December 6, the opening day of the new Congress, President Ulysses S. Grant started to read his message, ignoring tradition which called for the message to be given on the second day after the organization of the new body had been completed. Rising to the occasion young Holliday hastily determined to get out an extra even before regular publication of his paper had started.[10] This feat in itself, believed by many present day journalists to be unique in the history of American journalism, heralded the success of the new evening paper.[11]

Recalling the event in later years Mr. Holliday said:

> The first issue appeared on December 7, 1869, but after arrangements had been made for that date an opportunity presented itself for a 'scoop' on the morning papers. On December 6 President Grant issued his first message to Congress and I hastily determined to get out an extra before the paper was in existence. The extra was issued. In those days the telegraph service was not nearly so good as it is now and the message was badly mixed. It did not come in promptly and we did not get out the extra until 6:30 in the evening. It was a bitterly cold day and the streets were almost deserted and fewer than fifty copies of the extra were sold.[12]

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[8]Ibid. The old Sentinel building was originally known as Wesley Chapel, a Methodist Church at the southwest corner of Meridian Street and the Circle in Indianapolis. The Church has since been torn down.

[9]Ibid. The Indianapolis News was originally scheduled for publication in September of 1869 but the Wesley Chapel was not ready to receive the Sentinel plant until later that year.

[10]Indianapolis News, December 6, 1894.

[11]Personal conversation of writer with Stephen A. Noland, editor, the Indianapolis News, April 23, 1947, who quoted conversations of other editors at that year's American Newspapers Association convention in Cleveland, Ohio.

[12]Indianapolis News, December 6, 1894.

Regular publication of the Indianapolis News followed this unusual beginning. In the first regular issue Publisher Holliday was quick to set forth the editorial policy of the new paper. He said in his first regular issue:

> In its discussion of public matters and comment upon current events or the acts of public men, the News will try to treat everyone with fairness, and while it will not hesitate to denounce wrong or to uphold the right against the odds, no matter how strong, it will not attempt to deal a foul blow, or step beyond the bounds of common decency. While appreciating its responsibility, it will be fearless in the advocacy of what it deems right and proper and if mistaken, will be honestly so. It will be conducted sincerely, truthfully, independently, being the organ of neither individual, sect, nor party, and will always endeavor to promote the common good and improvement. It will ever be alive to the interests of Indianapolis and will, so far as it can, add to her prosperity, and the welfare of her citizens. In the development and growth of our beautiful city, the News will be always ready to extend helping hands.[13]

The friendly Sentinel publisher was quick to give his young friend a favorable notice in his powerful morning paper. In an editorial entitled "The New Evening Paper," he said:

> The long expected and much talked about new evening paper, The News made its appearance yesterday, and was sold by the newsboys like hotcakes. Everybody was interested in it, all being anxious to see what it looked like and what it contained. Now that it is a fixed fact we must congratulate Mr. Holliday upon his idea and his paper. That there is plenty of room in this city for a good, live evening paper, no one can deny, and if the News comes up to its promises, it cannot fail of cordial support at the hands of our citizens. An evening paper that gives press dispatches has long been a want in Indianapolis, and when such a paper combines with that feature careful attention to all matters of local importance, it becomes a necessity to our public.
>
> The News is a model of mechanical taste, and shows already quite a number of well arranged and displayed advertisements, evidence that our business men feel that it will become the evening paper of the city.[14]

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[13] Indianapolis News, December 6, 1894.

[14] Indianapolis Daily Sentinel, December 8, 1869.

The first issue of the Indianapolis News would seem small and inconsequential to the reader of today's paper. Containing only four pages, the paper was six columns in width with each page fifteen by twenty-two inches in size. The original issue carried on its masthead the words, "The News" with a block cut of the old Indianapolis Union Station separating the two words. The cut was soon dropped, however, and a new type face was selected. An entire column on the front page was devoted to brief items under the heading "Latest by Telegraph," Following the traditional custom of the day, other news was placed under simple headings such as "Washington, " "New York," "Virginia," "France," and "Great Britain." The second page contained the editorial previously mentioned in the policy of the newspaper and a second editorial commenting on President Grant's message to the Congress. Also carried on this page was the column "Scraps" which has been carried by the News to this day.

Unlike most papers today several advertisements were carried on the editorial page. These included advertisements for sewing machines, toys, Christmas articles, a Sentinel Bindery advertisement, etc. The third page contained the "Money and Trade" items, "Our Home Market" news, and bits of information of "State of Trade Elsewhere." Advertisements also were carried on this page for the "China Tea Store," "The News," and the "Daily Sentinel," and several drug advertisements of apothecaries. Page four of the paper contained "News Briefs of the City," hotel arrivals, business notices, and advertising of insurance firms, book advertisements, and one advertisement of the Crown Hill Cemetery.[15]

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[15] Indianapolis News, December 7, 1869.

Excluding the setting of the type and the press work, Mr. Holliday was personally responsible for most of the labor which went into the first issue and many succeeding issues of the new paper. The young publisher was the entire reporting and editorial staff as well as business head of the paper. His first editorial desk was a board across two barrels in the Sentinel bindery and a desk in the counting room of the latter paper served as the News business office. The entire space allotted to the paper consisted of two rooms, each only eight or ten feet square on the third floor of the Sentinel building.[16]

During the first week of publication Mr. Holliday printed an average of 2,000 copies daily, many of which were given away. Later this number was reduced to 1,200 for a bona fide list of subscribers. Quarters, such as they were, soon began to feel the pressure of the growing giant, a matter made more urgent by the growth of the circulation to 2,500 within three months. The paper received another boost in circulation when Mr. Holliday purchased the Indianapolis Mirror, a fifteen month old publication, edited by George Harding. A portion of the Mirror circulation was retained by the News.[17]

Along with the growth of the paper Mr. Holliday expanded his staff of assistants. A. J. Halford, an Indianapolis printer, was employed for six dollars a week to collect news items and act as "leg man" in the courts, state house, police station, etc. His items were brought to Mr. Holliday who put them into good form for the paper. Joseph W. Bingham, market editor of the Sentinel, was employed to get up market reports for

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[16] Indianapolis News, October 21, 1921.

[17] Ibid.

the little daily and Berry R. Sulgrove was engaged to do editorial writing. Mr. Sulgrove, however, left the News after about five weeks of service and once again all of the editorial work fell upon the publisher who at the time was working sixteen hours a day, a feat which he continued for the next year and one half. In addition to writing all the editorials, overseeing all the local news items and the exchange news, Mr. Holliday attended to the make-up of the paper and continued to look after the business department.[18]

Four months after the paper's founding, in March 1870, Mr. Holliday employed Will Pound as an assistant. The latter had been editor of the Greensburg Chronicle and correspondent of the Cincinnati Gazette. Mr. Pound remained with the News for about three months when Dan L. Paine came on the staff. Mr. Paine continued on the editorial staff until 1888, serving at various times as exchange and telegraph editor and looking after "state items."[19]

Growing pains continued to make themselves felt and within six months the old presses of the Sentinel could no longer handle the greatly increased circulation of the News. Mr. Holliday was forced to move his young paper to the building and offices of the Indianapolis Journal, Republican antagonist of the Sentinel, at the northeast corner of Market Street and the Circle in Indianapolis. Newer and faster presses enabled the circulation of the News to reach 4,000 in the summer of 1871.[20]

The ever climbing circulation of the News caused the publishers of the Journal to enter the evening newspaper field in 1871, thus giving

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[18]Indianapolis News, December 7, 1894.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Indianapolis News, December 7, 1929.

Editor Holliday his first serious competition. The owners of the Journal purchased the Evening Commercial, a paper started in 1867, and made it the evening edition of the Journal, with George Harding as managing editor. Local publishers and citizens regarded this effort as an attempt to displace the News in the afternoon field, but it was not successful and proved to be an expensive venture for the Journal owners. The new evening paper was soon given up and the Journal confined itself to the morning field.[21]

At about this time the News had developed the need for a city editor and Sidney D. Terry of Cincinnati filled that place for about one year beginning in 1871.[22]

That same summer Mr. Holliday, tiring of printing his paper on presses of other newspapers, made an ambitious move. He purchased a double cylinder Hoe press of the type used by the Sentinel and the Journal, and moved his rapidly growing News in October 1871 into what was then called the Publishing House at the southeast corner of Meridian and the Circle, diagonally across the street from the original headquarters.[23] Editorial offices were located on the first floor in the back half of the room with the carriers sharing the opposite half.[24]

Mr. Holliday, meanwhile, continued to add to his editorial staff and to make changes which were necessary. Giddon B. Thompson became city editor in May 1872 after leaving that position on the Sentinel. Frank Raymond was employed as his principal assistant and both continued in those positions until 1877.[25]

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[21]Jacob Piatt Dunn, Greater Indianapolis, "The Press" (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1910).

[22]Indianapolis News, December, 1894. [23]Indianapolis News, Dec. 7, 1929.

[24]Indianapolis News, October 21, 1921. [25]Indianapolis News, Dec. 6, 1894.

Of Mr. Holliday's early assistants, Mr. Thompson was probably by far the most important and was an important factor in building up the News. He had started his career reporting the city council for the Journal and the Sentinel in order to help out his earnings. Later he became a full time reporter on the Journal and still later took the position of city editor on the Sentinel, the post he held when joining the News staff. Mr. Thompson was one of the first early Indianapolis journalists to have definite ideas on the qualifications of a reporter. In a paper, "The Reporter" which he read before the State Editorial Association he described the requisite qualifications of a reporter as "(1) an Argus nose for news, (2) a talented pair of legs, and (3) brains."[26]

Mr. Thompson had all three qualifications and of his writing, he had the talent to invent unique expressions which caused enemies of the News no end of concern. Today he is best remembered for the campaigns he conducted against Street Commissioner Kennington, whom he made famous as "the little red wagon with the wart on it;" and the "Slick Six," a group of individuals comprising Harry Adams, Roscoe Hawkins, John Leonard, Dan Ransdell, Lee Mothershead, and Ot. Hasselman, who were then the brains of the local Republican machine.[27]

The News continued its growth despite trouble in the form of a printers' strike in 1874. During this strike all newspapers of Indianapolis were drawn into the fight with the Indianapolis Typographical Union, a group regarded at the time as one of the strongest labor organizations in the world, outside of printers employed by the Government in

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[26]Jacob Piatt Dunn. Greater Indianapolis, "The Press" (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1910). [27]Ibid.

Washington. The fight proved to be long, bitter, and dangerous at times and, although the union was defeated, it proved costly to the newspapers. The News bore the brunt of the attack and the Typographical Union made it the object of its attack, even going so far as to establish an evening paper, the Union, which was ably edited, and which prospered for a short time. The latter paper proved to be short-lived, however, and the public came to acknowledge that the News was correct in its policies.[28]

Later that same fall Mr. Holliday moved his press into the Sentinel building and in the spring again moved to larger quarters in the Martindale Block, located on the northeast corner of Market and Pennsylvania Streets in the Hoosier capital. Shortly after the move to the Martindale building Mr. Holliday formed the John H. Holliday and Company by taking his two brothers into business with him. Francis T. Holliday, who had been connected with the paper from the start, purchased an interest and in 1876 an interest was purchased by another brother, the Reverend William A. Holliday. In 1890 Major William J. Richards, who had been connected with the paper continuously since 1876, became a member of the company.[29]

It was during the two years that the News remained at the Martindale plant that the paper continued to prosper and the circulation increased to between 6,000 and 7,000. Press facilities became inadequate and the demand of new subscribers could not be met.[30] Mr. Holliday ordered the construction of a six cylinder Hoe press. To house the new equipment the

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[28]Indianapolis News, December 6, 1894.

[29]Jacob Piatt Dunn, Greater Indianapolis, "The Press" (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1910).

[30]Indianapolis News, October 21, 1921.

paper was moved in May 1876 for a fourth time in six years, this time back to the Journal building. In the years since the News had left the Journal quarters a new and modern publishing house had been built at the northeast corner of Market Street and the Circle in Indianapolis.[31]

For four years the News remained in the Journal building, steadily growing in circulation and increasing its influence on the community life of the Hoosier capital. Circulation increased from 7,000 to more than 12,000 and marked improvements were made in the style of the paper. Associated with the paper during this period of development were many men who were later to become outstanding citizens of Indianapolis. During the late 1870's Will C. Nicholas, A. J. Halford, Charles Dennis, and Ben Northrop were members of the News Staff. Mr. Nicholas and Mr. Halford held the city editor position at various times during the period following Mr. Thompson's resignation in 1877. In 1879 Elijah W. Halford joined his brother on the staff of the paper and in March of 1881 both brothers left the paper. Afterwards A. J. Halford returned and held the position of telegraph editor. George Parker served for some time as a local reporter and Lewis D. Hayes also did local reporting and was telegraph editor on the News from 1880 to 1882.[32]

In August of 1880 Mr. Holliday decided to give the paper a home of its own and a three story and a half building at 32 West Washington Street was acquired.[33] The site, present location of the ten-story Indianapolis News building, was occupied during the remaining years of Mr. Holliday's control of the paper. At about the same time as the

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[31] Indianapolis News, December 7, 1929.

[32] Indianapolis News, December 6, 1894.

[33] Indianapolis News, December 7, 1929.

move to the new location G. C. Mathews, former city editor of the Louisville Courier-Journal, succeeded Mr. Thompson as city-editor, a position he was to hold for two years before going to Chicago and taking a position on the Current. Mr. Thompson again took over the city-editorship in 1883 and held that post until 1887 when he was made state and amusement editor. He was succeeded by Hilton U. Brown who had began his career on the paper as a college correspondent for Butler University. He had been made a reporter in 1881.[34]

In 1888 Mr. Holliday again found himself faced with the problem of competition in the afternoon field. On May 12 of that year the Indianapolis Sun was founded by a company of five newspaper men who had worked together at Cleveland, Ohio. The chief stockholder and financial backer of the paper was J. S. Sweeny of Detroit, a member of the Scripps-McRae Company. The others included Fred L. Purdy, who was to be editor of the new paper; Charles J. Seabrook, who was to be the business manager; William S. Speed, who had charge of bookkeeping and office work; and A. C. Kiefer, who was to have charge of circulation. The Sun, established as a one cent paper, was supplied by the Scripps-McRae telegraph service and continued to compete with the News during the remainder of Mr. Holliday's ownership.[35]

Among Mr. Holliday's last major moves in connection with the growth of his paper was to begin using illustrations in 1889.[36] He also doubled the size of the paper in 1890 by permanently increasing the number of pages to eight for week days, except Saturday when four

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[34]Indianapolis News, December 6, 1894.

[35]Dunn, Jacob Piatt, Greater Indianapolis, The Press, (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1910).

additional pages were added.[37]

On May 12, 1892, having created and nursed a struggling young giant through troublesome post war years, Mr. Holliday announced his decision to retire. During the twenty-three years he had retained ownership and control of the Indianapolis News he had increased the circulation from 1,200 to more than 25,000 and had seen sixteen other Indianapolis evening newspapers run their course, more or less brief, and die out. It was during this same period that the Indianapolis Journal had been under six different managements and the Sentinel under seven or eight. When the Indianapolis News was not yet five years old, its editor, not yet out of his twenties, was the oldest English speaking journalist in continuous service in Indianapolis.[38]

At the age of forty-six and with the 6,981st issue of his paper, Mr. Holliday gave up the ownership of the News. For twenty-three years the publisher had personally supervised every editorial and news item published. It had always been his custom to check personally every galley proof before publication[39] and in a statement made at the time of his retirement Mr. Holliday tells us just how much detailed control and personal interest he took in the paper of his own making. He said,

> I am going out of the newspaper business on account of my health--I have had twenty-six years of sedentary life accompanied by many cares and under increasing strain my health has broken, as many of my friends know....It would be impossible to continue at the head of the paper and not give attention to the many demands that the vast business of the News now imposes. I have always believed that the life of a paper was in attention to the many demands and details. Consequently it has been hard to give these up even when my physicians and friends have pointed out how dangerous it has been for me to continue. My

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[37] Indianapolis News, October 21, 1921 .

[38] Indianapolis News, October 21, 1921.

[39] Conversation of the writer with Hilton U. Brown, treasurer of the Indianapolis News, a business associate and personal friend of the late John H. Holliday. April 10, 1947.

> My health has come to such a state that at last I am forced to act, and I prefer to retire altogether--to cut loose entirely and free myself."[40]

The News was sold to William Henry Smith, manager of the Associated Press, and his son-in-law, Charles R. Williams became editor-in-chief of the paper. Mr. Williams was a man of wide culture, graduating from Princeton in 1873 with honors and studying as a graduate student at Goettingen and Leipzig. He had been a tutor in Latin at Princeton and was for a time a professor of Greek at Lake Forest. He was editor of Potter's American Monthly: literary editor of the New York World; and assistant general manager of the Associated Press from 1883 to 1892 when he came to Indianapolis.[41]

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[40] Indianapolis News, May 12, 1892.

[41] Dunn, Jacob Piatt, Greater Indianapolis, The Press, (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1910).

CHAPTER III

A POLICY IS FORMED

Since the avowed interest of this study is the founding of an independent newspaper by John H. Holliday, pioneer journalist in Indianapolis, and his editorial policies during the critical post-war years of the administration of President Ulysses S. Grant, the remaining chapters are devoted to an intensive study of those local, national, and foreign issues as reflected in the editorial columns of the Indianapolis News. In the past two chapters the writer has dwelt in detail upon the founding and establishment of the News in order to provide a background for the reader concerning the trials undergone by the editor.

Founding a low-priced independent evening newspaper in the days of partisan high-priced morning journals was no small task even for the most experienced of newspaper men, so when Mr. Holliday started the Indianapolis News, one of his greatest tasks was to formulate a policy which would insure the success of his new journal. He was one of the early pioneers in the field of independent journalism. One historian, Jacob Piatt Dunn, in his chapter on "The Press" in Greater Indianapolis, considers the year 1870 "as a fort of dividing line in Indianapolis newspapers" because it marked the first year of a permanent independent afternoon paper, the Indianapolis News.

Previous to the founding of the Indianapolis News, Indiana had been without any important independent newspaper, a paper not affiliated with any particular political party or cause.[1] During the first months of

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[1]Jacob Piatt Dunn, Greater Indianapolis (Chicago,----) p. 1006.

publication, Mr. Holliday found it strange that his readers and competitors could not realize the difference between an independent and a neutral paper. It was his opinion that,

> . . . .A neutral paper takes no sides and holds no opinions. It is indifferent to one as well as another. It is an onlooker. An independent paper, on the contrary, is one that does take sides whenever it sees fit; one that has its opinions honestly and thoughtfully arrived at upon all subjects, but which exposes them without reference to their advocacy of any particular sect or party.

The young editor believed that it was his duty as the publisher of an independent newspaper to be ". . . .honest and conscientiously do what is right for the best interests of the community in which he lives." He freely admitted that he would often be wrong in his editorial policy, but he held that the News policy ". . . .is not to be dictated to by demagogues or controlled by party policy."[2]

Following the issuing of his "extra," Editor Holliday quickly established his general policies for all to read by publishing on his editorial page of the issue of December 7, 1869, the following editorial, often repeated throughout the life of the Indianapolis News.

Our Enterprise

> We offer today to the public the first number of the News. We hope it will be many years before we offer the last. In the belief that Indianapolis presents a field for the publication of a live evening newspaper, we have commenced the enterprise, and intend to continue it until fully convinced that we have been mistaken. We do not think, however, that the day will ever come. . . .The want of a good evening paper seems to be generally felt. People demand a sheet containing news; not a weak mixture of personal gossip and stale miscellany, but the very latest intelligence, served up in the freshest, liveliest style. They want a paper which will not mistake slang for wit, scolding and abuse for independence, and which will not treat the important events and questions of the day, which concern every one of us, in a flippant or contemptuous manner. The field is an open one, and we shall try to occupy it. In the outset it may be well to briefly set forth what we wish to do.

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[2]Indianapolis News, August 3, 1872.

It will be our aim to make the News, in every respect, equal to the wishes of its readers. It is not a very large sheet; we do not intend to publish as much matter as the metropolitan dailies, but we expect to give a subscriber the worth of his or her money, and to make a paper which will be sought after and read . . . .So far as news is concerned, no reasonable expense will be spared in its collection. As announced the dispatches furnished by the Associated Press, including valuable reports of the markets in other cities will be published, together with special dispatches from time to time, as events may occur. The local news will be carefully compiled and the greatest pains will be taken to furnish accurate and reliable reports of our home markets. Fresh and interesting miscellaneous reading will be found in every issue and we hope that The News will be a welcome visitor in hundreds of families in this city.

In its discussion of public matters, and comments on current events, or the acts of public men The News will try to treat everyone with fairness, and, while it will not hesitate to denounce wrong or to uphold the right against the odds, no matter how strong it will not attempt to deal a foul blow, or step beyond the bounds of common decency. While appreciating its responsibility, it will be fearless and if mistaken, will be honestly so. It will be conducted sincerely, truthfully, independently, being the organ of neither individual, sect, or party, and will always endeavor to promote the common good and improvement. It will ever be alive to the interests of Indianapolis, and will so far as it can, add to her prosperity and the welfare of her citizens. In the development and growth of our beautiful city, The News will always be ready to extend helping hands.

In the business department, the same principles which govern the editorial management will be observed. We shall treat all alike, having but one rule and one price. In order to place the paper within reach of every one, it will be furnished at as low a price as possible, and the advertising rates while fixed at the most reasonable figures which will admit of the enterprise permanently succeeding, have been equalized in a way which freely opens our columns to the public.[3]

During the period that Mr. Holliday was to retain the editorship of The News, the paper waged an unceasing editorial warfare against corruption, extravagance, and other abuses in government. As an independent Democrat, Mr. Holliday wanted his new paper to appeal to all people, the greatest majority, who were not affiliated with either party.[4] From the

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[3]Ibid., December 7, 1869.

[4]Personal conversation of the writer with Hilton U. Brown, treasurer of the Indianapolis News, a business associate and personal friend of the late John H. Holliday, April 10, 1947.

start the young editor concerned himself with civic, state, national, and foreign issues which rapidly developed during the post-war administration of President Grant. He constantly battled for reform in all government circles, particularly in the national field. He fought the "third term" issue of the period. His stand for "hard money," "free trade," opportunities for the newly enfranchised negro voter, fair treatment of the veteran, quick settlement of the Alabama claims, gained many new friends for The News. Just as many other editors of the same period, Mr. Holliday opposed women's suffrage and advocated constant vigilance toward the rapidly expanding railroads and the labor or trade union movement.

The young publisher was courageous and tried to be true to his editorial policy from the earliest issues of his new paper. He persisted in attacks on city, state, and national government abuses until the paper won wide respect and gained a strength which was to serve it well in meeting more powerful foes. In the early years of ownership of The News Mr. Holliday held the opinion that it was only necessary to convince men of the existence of an abuse and they would reform it. With experience he came to realize that an inertia often held men back, yet by constant "hammering" in his editorial columns, he was able to move them to correct evils.[5] Often in these numberous attacks upon evils in government his readers and, still more often, his competitors would accuse him of having deserted his original policy of independence. His constant reply, was that he intended to publish ". . . .an independent paper but not a neutral one. We never proposed to publish a wishy-washy neutral sheet without decided opinion upon any subject. We will discuss fully and fearlessly

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[5]Indianapolis News, October 21, 1921.

all measures affecting the people."[6] Mr. Holliday constantly criticized his competitors for their "party line" stand on important issues of the day and in turn drew their anger.

Early in the paper's career Mr. Holliday made The News attractive to women, so that it might become a household paper. That idea dominated its sections, features, and illustrations throughout the years and continues so even today. Mr. Holliday started the practice of printing poetry and there has never been an issue of the paper without a poem in it, a fact probably unique in journalism.[7] The publisher's notion of acceptability in the Indianapolis households went into the development of other principles which he had laid down, to be followed whether they led to success or failure.

From the beginning of his paper Mr. Holliday had strong ideas about the acceptability of certain forms of advertising. He refused many types of "medical" advertisements in the belief that they were unfit for reading and the products did harm to the user. He lost much revenue as the result of his stand on this type of advertising, but his firmness grew with the years. Another of Mr. Holliday's early advertising reforms stemmed from his rule of running no "editorial stimulation" or free publicity for his advertisers. Again he lost revenue, but the years proved his policy to be correct when advertisers came to recognize the merits of his stand.[8]

In his constant editorial supervision of The News Mr. Holliday sought to exclude from reports and comments, ". . . .salacious and sickening specifications," the endeavour extending not only to choice of words but

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[6]Ibid., January 24, 1870.

[7]Ibid., May 12, 1892.

[8]Ibid.

in the manner of presentation.[9] In his exclusion of "personal" and "society" gossip Mr. Holliday developed a dignity of news presentation. Because of its methods of expressing opinion in its editorial columns, The News achieved the reputation of a "hard hitter" and a fighter, but the editor insisted on respecting the sancity of individuality, always separating the man from the officer in attacking public abuses.[10]

During the twenty-three years Mr. Holliday was owner and publisher of The News he developed a very favorable policy toward employees of the paper. Wages were ". . . .dispensed with no scant hand" among employees and the paper came to be known among newspaper men of the country for its liberality.[11] Vacations with pay were given each year and time off for sickness was not taken from wages. These and other kindnesses developed an unbending loyalty to the paper and many a lasting friendship for the owner.[12]

That Mr. Holliday believed he was successful in placing in effect the policies laid out in his first editorial is brought out in many editorials published throughout his control of The News. During the fourth year of his editorship of The News he wrote:

> In publication of the news, The News has been honest and truth telling, and has not hesitated to publish whatever happened, from fear that it might injure some person or party, or might clash with the editorial opinion of other papers. It has acted on the principle that truth needs not to be hidden under a bushel but rather seeks the clear light of day; it is only the evil that prefers the darkness. . . .The News has always aided the cause which seemed right, and worked for the establishment of those principles of government whose success

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[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid.

> it deemed essential to the highest development of prosperity and good government. . . . .So far as the City of Indianapolis and the State of Indiana are concerned The News has always used its fullest power and influence for their benefit.[13]

In the fifth year of publication of his paper, Mr. Holliday repeated his original pledge that The News was ". . . .was pledged to the tenets of no party and is ever free to condemn the wrongdoing, of public officials and expose the self seeking plunderers who are robbing the taxpayers and trying to demoralize our institutions. It has entered upon no 'entangling alliances.'"[14] Mr. Holliday still held the belief that he had accomplished his original objectives upon his retirement from the editorship of his paper and in his final editorial stated:

> In laying down the duty which I then assumed, I can say conscientiously that the line of conduct marked out has been adhered to rigidly. I have tried to make The News fearless and independent; a defender of the right, as I saw it, at whatever cost; a worker for the whole people, not for a class, faction or individual; an advocate of good government; a friend of improvement and real progress; in short, I have sought that the power and influence of this paper should always tend to the maintenance of saving forces of society and the bettering of humanity. . . .And not the least satisfactory recollection in the breaking of a tie so dear is the assurance that the business methods of the paper have never been sullied by a single act that can cause regret now, that they have always been honest and straight-forward, and that every dollar the paper ever made has been a clean one.[15]

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[13] Ibid., March 12, 1872.

[14] Ibid., November 28, 1873.

[15] Ibid., May 12, 1892.

CHAPTER IV

THE NEWS AND CIVIC AFFAIRS

The first years of any new enterprise are usually the most critical from the standpoint of success or failure and so it proved for John Hampden Holliday's newly founded Indianapolis News. Having established his editorial policy firmly in the minds of his readers the young pioneer journalist set out to prove to the city, state, and nation that the idea of an afternoon independent newspaper was sound and that communities such as Indianapolis needed and would support such an endeavour.

Throughout the uproar of the Grant administration, although constantly devoting a great share of his attention to national and foreign affairs, Mr. Holliday campaigned steadily for "the people" in Indianapolis on matters of local importance. No local affair was too trivial to attract his attention when the welfare of the community was involved. He consistently advocated public parks, sewer improvements, better service on the part of utilities, honest and less expensive city government, better fire and police protection, stockyards, belt railroad around the city, and public asylums for the unfortunate.

City Improvements

With youthful editorial enthusiasm, which matured rapidly, Mr. Holliday entered into editorial crusades in the first issues of his paper. One of the first of these campaigns urged the City Council to build a city

prison or station house for the Indianapolis police force. Although an advocate of capital punishment[1] and swift justice to criminals he believed that "prisoners should be kept like human beings not brutes, and mere boys should not be thrown in with hardened criminals."[2] In his effort to obtain a prison or station house for the city, Mr. Holliday demanded action by the City Council and requested that the matter be attended to at once. When a contract was let for the building and the Council wished to reconsider the matter, the young editor again made clear his stand. "We want a station house and the majority in the council have done right in awarding the contract."[3] He won his first battle when the City Council reaffirmed this decision and the prison was authorized at a cost "not to exceed more than $8,000."[4]

Throughout the next four years Mr. Holliday advocated the establishment of institutions which would help control crime in Indianapolis. He advocated the construction of a local reformatory school "to suppress the steadily growing evil of youthful gangs."[5] The institution, under Mr. Holliday's plan, would be self-supporting with work being done by the boys. Repeating his advice given in the campaign for a city prison, Mr. Holliday again editoralized that separate accomodations should be built for juvenile offenders as it was "too bad to keep them in jail where they can only learn wickedness, yet they can't go unpunished."[6] He further expressed the opinion that it would be a great deal cheaper to care for young offenders and try to reform them than to allow them to grow up into criminals, who would be supported by the state.[7] Action on this matter was delayed for

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[1] Indianapolis News, August 26, 1871. [2] Ibid., February 2, 1870.

[3] Ibid., February 8, 1870. [4] Ibid., February 22, 1870.

[5] Ibid., April 26, 1872. [6] Ibid., June 22, 1872. [7] Ibid.

two years, but on December 14, 1874, Mr. Holliday was able to write:

> . . . .The Grand Jury has again taken up the idea advanced and continually advocated by The News, that the county establish a work-house for juvenile offenders. As a preventive of crime we believe the establishment of such an institution would be of the greatest benefit and would save over and over again in safety of property and freedom from annoyance.

Later, in 1875 and 1876, Mr. Holliday was able to accomplish another objective, the establishment of a Newsboys' Home.[8]

Mr. Holliday was never modest when it came to extolling Indianapolis as a city of unlimited opportunities. He requested the citizens to write their friends of the advantages of Indianapolis and to treat strangers in a civil manner when they came to investigate the city's representations. "With an enterprising public spirit and a universal disposition to work for the city and for ourselves, there can be no bounds to the progress and prosperity of Indianapolis."[9] Upon the occasion of an excursion to Indianapolis by the Federal Board of Agriculture, Mr. Holliday suggested that officials and businessmen entertain the visitors and, ". . . .let men know that they will be welcome here, that, no mean spirit of exclusiveness prevails, and it will do a great deal toward persuading them to locate in the city."[10] Immigration was a field not to be over-looked and Mr. Holliday suggested that the Indiana Legislature might provide means to present the advantages of Indianapolis to those seeking homes in the United States. He recommended the printing of literature in foreign languages and that it be sent to Europe so that all would know of Indianapolis, and he considered it a good idea to send an agent to New York City to "call attention to Indiana of arriving emigrants, and to aid them in reaching here should they decide to emigrate here."[11]

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[8] Ibid., February 2, 1876.

[9] Ibid., March 2, 1870.

[10] Ibid., April 4, 1870.

[11] Ibid., April 5, 1870.

Parks

Along with Mr. Holliday's pride in his city was a desire to beautify and to provide places for rest and recreation. As early as April of 1871, he suggested the construction of a park at the Canal and St. Clair Street.[12] He commended the City Council's action in appropriating money to buy trees for University Park and the Circle Park. "Such places are highly acceptable to the city and they add to its reputation and give it not a little tone, aside from all the sanitary benefits."[13] When the City Council turned down several gifts of land which were to be made into parks The News was very critical and demanded:

> . . . .Made parks whenever they can be got for nothing and wherever anybody will be benefited by them, south, north, east and west. And don't look a gift horse in the mouth when it comes to you without restrictions."[14]

Pointing out that land values in all parts of the city were increasing, The News cautioned that, "it will never be any cheaper than it is now and if city can procure land for park purposes for nothing it is the supremest folly not to take it."[15] Later when the City Council proposed to buy the Southern Fairgrounds (now Garfield Park) for $110,000, Mr. Holliday supported the movement and advocated that the purchase be made at once before the price advanced still further. When a company was formed in the city to purchase the Fairgrounds as location for a race course, Mr. Holliday again urged the Council to make the investment, "because if a park is needed anywhere it is needed in the South end, for there are the bulk of our workingmen and poor people to whom a park is of great value."[16] When the Council finally purchased the Southern Fairgrounds the editorial columns of

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[12] Ibid., April 12, 1871. [13] Ibid., April 19, 1871.

[14] Ibid., June 16, 1873. [15] Ibid., July 3, 1873. [16] Ibid., Sept. 1, 1873.

The News stated that, "the Council has exhibited forethought and if the city grows, the future will prove it to have been a very profitable investment."[17] In 1875 after months of criticism on the part of The Sentinel for The News' part in promoting the purchase of a park in the southern part of the city, Mr. Holliday answered:

> . . . .When a town is assured of steady growth, the wisest outlay it can make, next to that for good schools and dry streets is for breathing and resting places, whether they be parks or open squares or boulevards. Parks or their congeners are a provision of health and the better form of existence that comes with recreation and change. Time to get them is when ground can be had cheap. To be of best service they must be large, with a chance for solitude, grass, flowers, and a stream if it be possible.
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> Ground is worth more near these recreation places than it is anywhere, except in crowded business districts. For these reasons The News sustained action of the City Council in the purchase of the Southern park. In five years there won't be a sensible man or woman between State Avenue and Kappess' bluff who won't say that no money was ever more judicially laid out.[18]

Public health, welfare, and morals in Indianapolis were constantly under the watchful eye of Mr. Holliday. Concerning the streets of the city, the young editor campaigned for the appointment of an inspector. "Close inspection of material and work is a necessity and the Council's action will be heartily approved."[19] Although Mr. Holliday favored all efforts at making Indianapolis a greater and larger city, he continually critized the City Council for putting streets and bridges where they were not needed.

The Slaughter Houses

In January of 1872, complaints from citizens as to the location of the Small Pox Hospital in the Fall Creek bottom land, reached his ears and exposed a sanitary condition that was to lead him into a campaign against

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[17] Ibid., January 20, 1874.

[18] Ibid., April 19, 1875.

[19] Ibid., July 6, 1870.

the dumping of slaughter house remains into Fall Creek. In March of the same year, Mr. Holliday called for City Council action on regulating disposal of the Slaughter House remains. "There comes a time in a city's growth when slaughter houses must be put under restraint. Slaughter houses must not poison the city's air or water and citizens must not go without meat."[20] Mr. Holliday asked for a system of municipal regulation of slaughter houses, something that would do for the present, the next decade, and the next generation. By way of solution to the pressing problem, The News suggested the establishment of city owned slaughter houses that could be kept free from offensive odors, and where the meat could be inspected. "We think no intelligent man can doubt that such an establishment would be a vast advance on the little, filthy, stinking, private houses that now infest the city."[21] When the City Council refused to vote for the erection of city owned slaughter houses The News continued its attack against the "stench that assails the western part of the city." Approximately one year later Mr. Holliday was able to write:

> More than one year ago when the pork house offal was filling the river, we repeatedly urged the city and the packers to dispose of it by conversion into fertilizing material. Mr. Kingan has his offal hauled to Sellers farm where it is converted into fertilizing materials and sold as fast as it is made. Kingan's today is as 'sentless' as can be.[22]

Mr. Holliday was an advocate of "local option" in regard to the temperance question. It was his belief that the principle of local option was the principle of democracy and that if a community did not want a saloon in it, no legislative body had the right to force one on it.[23]

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[20] Ibid., March 13, 1872.

[21] Ibid., March 15, 1872.

[22] Ibid., June 14, 1873.

[23] Ibid., October 7, 1874.

Four major civic editorial campaigns were waged by The News during the period 1870 to 1876. Although affairs of the national government under President Grant attracted a great deal of Mr. Holliday's attention, as will be discussed later, he still devoted ample space to local government reform, city sewer contracts, a plan for a coal railroad between the southern Indiana coal fields and the city, and the question of a belt railroad and Union Stockyards.

Local Government Reform

During the late summer of 1870 Mr. Holliday became disgusted with the conduct of public officials in the city and of Marion County in particular. Proclaiming it the duty and right of citizens to reform their governments, The News advocated a reform movement, "taking the best from both parties, and seek to bring about reform for the common good."[24] The reform movement was to be an effort on the part of honest men in both parties to perform their duties efficiently and for fair compensation when elected to office. Mr. Holliday estimated that if the reform movement in city and county offices was a success between forty and sixty thousand dollars would be saved from the pockets of office holders. He believed this to be the amount office holders were taking in in fees. "Part of the movement is to secure legislation as will hereafter enforce economy by law."[25] The reform movement sought to set a fair rate of compensation for office holders on the Reform ticket and candidates were pledged to take certain salaries and no more.[26] The News accused the city and county Republicans of using money at county conventions in controlling who was to run for office and stated on many occasions that, ". . . .the only reform we advocate is that the people shall rule and these men who hold office shall not buy them but be chosen

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[24] Ibid., August 12, 1870.

[25] Ibid., August 17, 1870.

[26] Ibid., August 18, 1870.

by the people."[27] Both the Journal, the Republican party organ, and the Sentinel, the Democratic paper, opposed The News support of the reform movement throughout the fall of 1870, but Mr. Holliday was never swayed from his purpose. Even when opposition candidates tried to make certain of the negro vote in Indianapolis by telling that race the reform movement favored the restoration of slavery or using Chinese labor to drive the negro away, Mr. Holliday was confident that the "intelligent white vote, disgusted with trickery and extravagance, are determined to put it down."[28] Preceeding the fall elections The News urged every citizen in the county to vote by saying, "Let every voter, young or old, white or black, go to the polls and vote according to the best of his knowledge and belief."[29] For the first time the people of the community did not follow the lead of the new evening independent paper and The News' campaign for reform in city and county offices failed when party backed candidates were reelected.

The City Sewers

Negotiations for city sewer contracts, also starting during the summer of 1870, offended Mr. Holliday's civic pride when contracts were let to a Cincinnati firm whose bid was considerably higher than that of a local firm. Commenting that, ". . . .there is room for big stealing in this business and there are men not a bit too good to take that room and all in the main building on the best sort of terms--for themselves," The News set about to prove that the negotiations were a "set up job" in the way the City Council treated the matter. Proving that the Cincinnati firm's bid was $12,678.22 higher than the local bid, Mr. Holliday stated that a brother of a councilman was interested in the Cincinnati firm and that the "public suspects that bribery is involved."[30] He called upon the Mayor and

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[27] Ibid., August 27, 1870.

[28] Ibid., September 21, 1870.

[29] Ibid., October 10, 1870.

[30] Ibid., July 23, 1870.

the City Attorney to act in protecting local citizens and interests of the city. When the City Council refused to reconsider the sewer bids, The News published the votes of the council members and advised citizens to clip the article and save it for the next election.[31] Further investigations by The News discovered that two members of the City Council were offered bribes to vote for the local firm and that that factor led the entire Council to award the contract to the Cincinnati firm. Mr. Holliday advised citizens of Indianapolis to take the matter to court and let the legality of the affair be tested and "in the meantime the responsibility of again postponing the building of sewers, must rest where it belongs, with those councilmen who were determined to bluff through a scheme which was sheer robbery to tax-papers."[32] The entire sewer scandal so sickened the editor of The News that he was prompted to write, "The Sewer contract is the first undoubtedly, indisputable 'job' that has ever been put through our city legislature. The affair will remain in our city's history unless legal remedies shall relieve us of it. Was ever a policy so blind, blundering, and so abominable."[33] Defending the Democratic members of the City Council The Sentinel came out in favor of the sewer contract stating that the council had done right in awarding the Cincinnati firm the contract in view of the attempted bribe. To this The News answered, "We know now where it stands and that it is in favor of robbing the people of $15,000."[34] Mr. Holliday saw fit to drop the entire matter when construction work was started and that the public did not care to correct what he believed to be an injustice.

The Coal Road

It was with the issue of establishing a coal railroad between

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[31] Ibid., July 24, 1870.

[32] Ibid., July 25, 1870.

[33] Ibid., July 26, 1870.

[34] Ibid., July, 27, 1870.

Indianapolis and the coal fields of southern Indiana that Mr. Holliday first brought forth a policy which, once established, was to be followed throughout the years of his editorship. During the latter part of 1872 many prominent Indianapolis citizens, including certain businessmen, advocated the construction of a railroad to bring coal directly to the city from the mines and fields around Sullivan. The News was violent in its opposition to the plan on the basis that it was never a good plan to use public money to finance what should be a private enterprise. Throughout the campaign against the coal road Mr. Holliday repeatedly warned his readers that, ". . . .men who vote for the coal road donation vote to increase taxes by two thirds and to give a half a million dollars to a company that can offer no return except vague promises, which are not worth the paper they are written on."[35] One argument advanced by proponents of the coal road was that Indianapolis would be provided with cheaper coal than any other city and thereby would be able to attract additional industries. The News replied to this by saying:

> No business is more difficult to create than the railroad business. The coal road presupposes that coal operators will be ready to invest their means as soon as the road is started . . . . Men are slow to take hold of a new enterprise and if business of the road is slow how will the deficit be made up? Will the city be called upon for further contributions?"[36]

When the coal road issue was brought to a test and defeated by public ballot, editorial columns of The News were able to proclaim, ". . . .the coal road is defeated and shows manifestation of good sense and sound business policy. The News is gratified that its opinions have been so heartily approved by the people."[37] The issue was dropped until early in

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[35] Ibid., January 3, 1873.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid., January 10, 1873.

1876 when a private company inquired into the possibility of building the road with private means. Editor Holliday quickly approved of the idea, saying that, ". . . .The News favors construction of the coal road under private capital but not under public capital. We believe such a road would be of great value to Indianapolis and would be a famous advertisement."[38] Evidently the enterprise failed, for in October of the same year Mr. Holliday again found it necessary to campaign against a request on the part of Center Township in Marion County for an appropriation of $100,000 from the city to construct such a railroad. The News, summarizing its objections to the plan stated that:

> We decidedly oppose the subsidy for several reasons. We do not believe in using public money for any purpose whatever except those necessary for good government. The subsidy will increase the public burden at a time when the greatest benefit that can be secured is to reduce it. There is not good reason to believe that such a road, if built, will accomplish the objective, that of providing cheap fuel.[39]

Once again through the editorial columns of his paper, Mr. Holliday was able to defeat the use of public money for the building of a coal road and was able to report that, ". . . .The coal road election excited very little interest yesterday, only 4,808 votes being cast of which 2,732 were against the appropriation."[40]

The Belt Railroad

The period of the administration of President Grant was an era which saw great railroad companies formed to push their tracks ever westward and Indianapolis became a center for east and west transportation as well as a meeting point for lines from the south and north. Mr. Holliday

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[38] Ibid., February 19, 1876.

[39] Ibid., October 21, 1876.

[40] Ibid., October 25, 1876.

was quick to see that growth of the railroads would soon bring many problems to the city and therefore recommended that they, ". . . .begin the policy to which they must finally come, of establishing a common transfer depot outside the city, and make connections where they won't cross crowded streets or be crossed by them."[41] The Union Station of Indianapolis at that time accomodated the trains of twelve railroads and was rapidly becoming overcrowded. The News advanced the plan that, ". . . .enlarging the depot is not necessary. A separate building should be used so that passengers will not be confused by getting north and south and east and west bound trains tangled up."[42] Increasing railroad traffic through Indianapolis soon brought with it the problem of tying up wagon and pedestrian transportation in the southern section of Indianapolis. Fire engines and police vehicles would often have to wait for long periods of time while freight trains blocked the streets. Mr. Holliday was one of the first men in the city to advance the idea that the causes of the trouble were "at grade" crossings. Declaring that no section of the city should be denied fire and police protection, The News advanced the theory that, ". . . .the streets and railought to cross on different levels and the railways ought to bear a full half at least of the cost of making the change."[43] Mr. Holliday campaigned for the placing of the streets under the tracks as, ". . . .not very expensive and once well done need never be done over."[44] During discussions of the City Council as to the relative merits of bridging the tracks of tunneling under them The News supported the plan to try both methods. "Between the two experiments we are likely to get at the best, cheapest,

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[41] Ibid., May 6, 1871. [42] Ibid., July 27, 1871.

[43] Ibid., September 23, 1871. [44] Ibid., September 23, 1871.

and most convenient method. We believe tunnels will be found the more practicable, but we are desirous that bridges be tried so there will be no complaint in the future."[45] Both methods were tried in the years that followed and the bridging method of placing the tracks over the street was found to be the most practicable.

Late in 1876, Mr. Holliday again had occasion to caution the citizens of Indianapolis against the use of public funds for enterprizes which he considered private in nature. The occasion was the promotion of a project for a belt railroad and stockyards for the city. A group of businessmen had formed a company for the development of the program and had requested the city for a loan of $500,000. The News agreed that, ". . . .both would add much to business of the city and convenience but the cost of the project would not amount to $500,000."[46] Throughout his campaign against the use of city funds for the building of the belt railroad and the stockyards, Mr. Holliday stressed again and again that, ". . . .the gentlemen mean to build the road and yard for their private gain on the city's loan and the city would not derive monetary benefit."[47] The News constantly insisted that, ". . . .the public should see an estimate prepared by competent engineers as to the cost before calling on the city to extend its credit."[48] One of the soundest arguments that Mr. Holliday mustered against the loan was the fact that the debt of the city was limited by law to two percent of the aggregate value of property on the tax duplicates and the new loan would double that amount. A sounder argument put forth by Mr. Holliday was to

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[45] Ibid., December 12, 1871.

[46] Ibid., September 4, 1876.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid., September 27, 1876.

the effect that it was, ". . . .a good rule that when private capital will not undertake an enterprise, it is not safe."[49] From an investment standpoint preceding the vote by the City Council on the issue, The News summarized its arguments against the project thus:

> We do not regard the charter provision authorizing a loan on petition as mandatory on the City Council. We believe it is in the discretion of the council as the matter of other petitions is. . . .whether legal or not, the loan increases the city debt. Interest alone will take six to seven cents of tax every year and principal will take nearly a dollar. . . .There is not sufficient margin of security to make such a loan safe, even if security were of undoubted value. . . .There is no security for use of the Belt road by other railroads and if they won't make their transfers by it one of the chief resources is lost. . . .Five of the railroads entering here own the Union tracts and have a direct interest in the maintenance of their competition with the Belt transfer line. . . .Other roads will just as soon use the Union tracts as the Belt to make freight transfers, if they can do it as cheaply and speedily and as the Belt would cost more it can't charge less. . . .Without the patronage of all or most of the roads, the Belt will have to depend on the stockyards for profit and we have no evidence that alone will make a paying investment.[50]

When the City Council passed an ordinance in favor of the belt railroad and stockyard loan Mr. Holliday's disappointment was very great and he stated: "We believe that the council has made a great mistake in passing this ordinance, and one that will be bitterly regretted before many months have passed, if the contract is consummated."[51] When the question concerning the city's power to lend credit on the belt railroad project was taken before the city attorney and his opinion was adverse to the entire loan. The News stated with a great deal of satisfaction that, ". . . .the belt road matter was probably ended with the opinion handed down by the city attorney to the effect that the entire matter was illegal and the council has no power to exceed the legal debt."[52] The entire matter ended when

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[49] Ibid., October 14, 1876.

[50] Ibid., October 16, 1876.

[51] Ibid., October 17, 1876.

[52] Ibid., October 30, 1876.

the City Council decided to let the belt railroad ordinance alone until the legislature had met. It was hoped by many that the statute concerning the debt could be amended so as to permit the loan.[53]

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[53] Ibid., October 31, 1876.

CHAPTER V

THE NEWS AND NATIONAL POLITICS

If one were requested to consider the question of what topic was most characteristic of the editorial pages of John Hampden Holliday's Indianapolis News during the years of the administration of President Ulysses S. Grant, the most logical answer would probably be that of national politics. Like most editors of his time, Mr. Holliday was intensely interested in the national government and its struggle to recover from the days of Civil War. The young editor watched the changing national scene with a critical interest that found him first in one political camp and then another as vital issues reached a climatic height in an administration that will long be remembered as one of the most corrupt in our nation's history.

In his early editorials concerning President Grant, Mr. Holliday believed him to have been, ". . . .unfortunate in selecting, not so much incompetent men, as unpopular men for office and losing them after their services had in a measure made them acceptable to the country."[1] The young editor first displayed his dissatisfaction with the administration when the Republican politicians of Pennsylvania forced the President to succumb to their demands that Secretary of the Interior John D. Cox be removed from the cabinet. Mr. Holliday commented that, ". . . .Secretary Cox is probably one of the ablest men in the cabinet. He tends to his duties to the

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[1] Indianapolis News, July 11, 1870.

best of his knowledge and ability."[2] Secretary Cox's refusal to allow the politicians of Pennsylvania to force clerks of the Interior Department to pay campaign expenses, had gained him the former's ill-will. When the rumor of Secretary Cox's resignation reached Indianapolis The News proclaimed;

> . . . .if Grant has accepted his resignation under badgering of the Pennsylvania politicians he will have disgraced himself. The Secretary is fighting for the very objectives Grant declared should be the aim of his administration and the President should uphold his hands instead of weakly surrendering him to the common enemy.[3]

President Grant's refusal to act on the resignation of Secretary Cox caused Mr. Holliday to comment on the growing conflict between the President and job seekers, ". . . .the President has gradually been yielding ground to the enemy and one by one he has abandoned his principles and lessened hope of reformation."[4]

The next national figure to incur the wrath of President Grant and thus attract the attention of Editor Holliday was Charles Sumner, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the United States Senate. Mr. Sumner had vigorously opposed President Grant's appointment to the latter's brother-in-law, M. J. Cramer, as Minister to Denmark and in addition had caused Secretary of State Hamilton Fish no end of trouble in his negotiations with England over the Alabama claims.[5] For these two reasons, Republican leaders decided upon the removal of Mr. Sumner. Mr. Holliday saw in this move President Grant's, ". . . .determination to punish resistance to his ambition, to dragoon dissent by the party lash, and he rouses more wrath than he quells, and if he does just one other as injustifiable an act as the removal of Sumner, his renomination will be very doubtful, and his defeat about as certain as anything that has not happened."[6] The following day

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[2]Ibid., September 28, 1870. [3]Ibid., October 17, 1870.

[4]Ibid., October 18, 1870.

[5]Allen Nevins, Hamilton Fish, (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company 1936), p. 460-461. [6]Indianapolis News, March 13, 1871.

Mr. Holliday, still disturbed because of General Grant's latest action wrote:

> . . . .We believe as we said yesterday, that the President and his friends Chandler, Nye, and Cameron, who are trying to manage the Republican party as Tweed and Sweeney manage the New York Democracy, have given this renomination an ugly blow, and one more like it will be fatal."[7]

In July, 1871, Horace Greeley, editor of the New York Tribune, attracted the attention of Mr. Holliday as a possible candidate for the presidency and caused him to report, ". . . . a man of half his brains and a tenth of his dogmatism and meddlesomeness would do vastly better. He would try to be the whole government and succeed in being the most intolerable nuisance that ever a people endured."[8] By the end of August, however, The News thought better of Mr. Greeley, and editoralized, ". . . . Politicians may talk as they will, but there is no man in the country so popular today as Horace Greeley, and no man's popularity is better founded. The American people are looking for an honest man."[9]

As the fall of 1871 faded away and winter heralded the renewal of political activity preceding all of the national conventions, Mr. Holliday intensified his campaign against the renomination of President Grant for a second term. Over and over again he stated his views that,

> . . . . Grant's personal feelings have seriously impaired the value of his public services. He has received presents, his relatives have shamed him in seeking offices, he has mixed needlessly in local conflicts, he has been a silly brother-in-law, a fair administrator, but an unwise visitor at summer resorts.[10]

Mr. Holliday rose immediately to support a plan on the part of Senator Sumner, ". . . . to amend the constitution so as to make a man who has once

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[7] Ibid., March 14, 1871.

[8] Ibid., July 24, 1871.

[9] Ibid., August 30, 1871.

[10] Ibid., November 21, 1871.

held office as President ineligible for reelection forever."[11] To the News the plan seemed practical.

In January, 1872, Mr. Holliday accused administration senators of, ". . . . having lost sight of the Republican party and everything else but Grant. He is the all and end-all. Opposition to him is rebellion to the party and treason to the government. The party lash is applied, the gag put on and everything done to prevent a free expression of opinion."[12] One month later The News was convinced, ". . . . Grant will, in all probability, be the next President. Yet he is openly opposed by some of the ablest men and papers of his party, and a cheerful readiness to take anybody else is expressed by many more."[13] A Republican victory in New Hampshire during the early part of March convinced The News that, ". . . . we may, reasonably enough, conclude that such a demonstration will settle the question as to Grant's renomination, if it were not settled before."[14]

The Liberal Republican Convention which gathered in Cincinnati on May 1, 1872,[15] gave The News new hope and its editorial page reported:

> .... The convention was successful in every respect. To purify the party and take it out of the hands of jobbers and corruptionists was the expressed desire of almost every man present, and with this view it did its work. . . . The Honorable Horace Greeley was the people's choice. . . . Horace Greeley is the most popular man in the United States. . . . He can command more votes than any other candidate and is more acceptable to all classes."[16]

In still another burst of renewed hope Mr. Holliday asserted, ". . . . A week ago it seemed certain that Grant would be nominated. The Cincinnati movement materially changed public opinion and promises to draw off a large number of votes whose support was depended on to elect him. Party managers

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[11] Ibid., December 23, 1871.
[12] Ibid., January 12, 1872.
[13] Ibid., February 15, 1872.
[14] Ibid., March 14, 1872.
[15] Nevins, op. cit., p. 587.
[16] Indianapolis News, May 4, 1872.

are seriously alarmed."[17] In June, 1872, when the Republican Convention was held at Philadelphia and President Grant was nominated for a second time Mr. Holliday merely reported, ". . . . His patronage and power were too great to be overcome and questions of principle were merged in his personal candidacy."[18]

Throwing the entire strength of his paper into the campaign to elect Horace Greeley, Mr. Holliday was taken aback when the national Democratic Convention held in Baltimore took up Greeley as its candidate. In no uncertain terms, The News editorial columns proclaimed;

> . . . . Mr. Greeley is not a Democrat as everyone knows. He is a Republican and comes before the country as a Republican candidate, the nominee of the Cincinnati convention. We support him as a Republican and as the exponent of true Republican principles. If he was a Democrat we would not touch him.[19]

Mr. Holliday soon realized that, ". . . . some Republicans do not particularly like Grant but will support him because the Democrats are supporting Greeley."[20] Mr. Holliday held the opinion that this factor might defeat Mr. Greeley. He, therefore, was not too surprised when President Grant was reelected for a second term and reported, ". . . . Grant is reelected by a most overwhelming majority and his most ardent supporters will be entitled to their boast that his administration has been heartily endorsed by the American people. . . . Grant now has the opportunity to retrieve some of these mistakes."[21]

To understand better Mr. Holliday's attitude toward President Grant and his administration during the second term it is only necessary to review the events of major importance which came under the editor's critical eye

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[17] Ibid., May 9, 1872. [18] Ibid., June 7, 1872. [19] Ibid., July 3, 1872.
[20] Ibid., August 12, 1872. [21] Ibid., November 6, 1872.

toward the end of the first term. What Mr. Holliday noted during that period caused him to campaign all the more vigorously against the corruption that shocked the nation, to constantly advocate reform in the national government, to look with hope at the continuation of the reconstruction program in the South, and to combat the "third term" issue.

Reform

As early as 1870, The News was calling on Congress to abolish the franking privilege[22] (the practice of allowing Congressmen to send their mail without postage), admonishing Congress for absenteeism of its members,[23] and condemning the practice of "black-mailing of clerks and officials in Washington with a plan toward the levying of political contributions for campaigns."[24] When the clerks in Washington resisted the demands of the Republican Congressional Committee for a percentage of their salaries to be used for campaign purposes, Mr. Holliday stated that, ". . . . Such action is in every respect demoralizing to civil service and is fraught with danger."[25] Mr. Holliday believed that:

> . . . . So long as civil service appointments are contingent upon political services, so long will we have the most extravagant government in the world. With civil service reform and departments conducted in a business-like way, the positions given only on grounds of merit, the business of the government would be transacted better, and not much more, if any, than half the cost.[26]

By November of 1870, The News was convinced that the national administration had:

> . . . . determined upon practicing the theory that 'to the victor belong the spoils' and flinging every attempt at civil service overboard will go on to win a second term by proper distribution of government patronage. A more corrupt, unblushing system of bribery never characterized any administration, not even excepting Andrew Jackson's which the virtuous politicians are so fond of denouncing as the worst the country has ever seen."[27]

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[22] Ibid., April 15, 1870. [23] Ibid., April 21, 1870. [24] Ibid., Aug. 1, 1870.

[25] Ibid., August 8, 1870. [26] Ibid., Sept. 3, 1870. [27] Ibid., Nov. 5, 1870.

During the months preceding the election of President Grant for a second term, The News continued to denounce the "old" Republican party in favor of the Liberal Republicans who had endorsed Mr. Greeley as their candidate. Directing his attack against the "old guard" Mr. Holliday stated, ". . . . The Republican party was formed to destroy slavery and reorganize the nation on a basis of equal rights to all men. That object has been accomplished and the party, instead of being a party of progress, has become a party of opposition and conservatism."[28] Although Mr. Greeley was not elected The News saw great good derived from the Liberal Republican movement.

> . . . . It lifted the old Democratic party out of its slough of conservatism and factious opposition in which it had been plunged for ten years. It has made the party renounce its old doctrines and accept the questions settled by a long and bloody war as really settled. . . .Time for thorough reconciliation has been hastened. The robberies and outrages of carpet-baggers will not be tolerated as heretofore.[29]

The Salary Grab

Following President Grant's election, The News devoted considerable editorial space to the Salary Grab, an act passed by Congress on March 3, 1873, providing that increases in salaries of Senators and Representatives, previously granted by another act, should date from 1871.[28] Day after day throughout the year Mr. Holliday followed his policy of "hammering away" at the salary bill. In December he wrote:

> The real heinousness of the salary bill is not that it increased the pay of members of Congress, but that it contained a retroactive clause. After a session of the most prodigious villainy, corruption, wholesale robbery of the people, bribery, almost in the last hour this bill was rushed through, the President of the United States lobbying for it and approving it

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[28] Ibid., March 29, 1872. [29] Ibid., November 7, 1872.

> almost before the vote could be recorded. It paid each member $5,000 more for his services than he had agreed to give them for. It cannot be defended. It is a violation of decency and honor and is an insult to the American people. Nobody disputes the right of Congress to increase the salaries of its members and we don't think the present salary of $7,500 per year, is any too great if nothing is paid for milage and there is no franking privilege. No reasonable man objects, but for a representative to take public money that he never expected to get is an unqualified outrage. The business of the voting and tax-paying people now is to watch out for the men who grabbed. Be they high or be they low, they are unfaithful, untrustworthy servants. Spot them and drive them out like the leper. The are unclean, unclean.[30]

Just before the bill was repealed The News displayed Mr. Holliday's satisfaction with the trend of events and he reported, ". . . . Debate on the Salary Reduction Bill shows the majority appear resolved to undo a wrong or to please their constituents right or wrong. The nation's eyes were forced upon by the audacious baseness of the act and the evil once seen, popular feeling swayed back and has borne Congress with it."[31]

Money Question

Of the many national issues which further shocked the nation into an acute awareness of the corrupt nature of its government, The News centered its attack on demands for resumption of specie payments and campaigned for rapid reconstruction of the South. Mr. Holliday devoted little space to the Credit Mobilier scandal which came to light in 1872 discrediting several high governmental officials including Vice-President Schuyler Colfax, and Vice-President Henry Wilson.[32] However, on the same day he successfully concluded his attack on the salary grabbers, he renewed his efforts to bring about the resumption of specie payments, an issue he had editoralized on from time to time. During the remaining three years of President Grant's second term the subject of "hard money" (the backing by the government

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[30]Ibid., Dec. 9, 1873. [31]Ibid., Dec. 12, 1873.

[32]Nevins, op. cit., p. 611.

of greenbacks with gold) became an important political issue. Calling the current issue of greenbacks "protested promissory notes," Mr. Holliday suggested that Congress unify the currency backing it with "hard money."[33] From time to time Mr. Holliday had to answer criticism from his competitors who accused him of wanting to replace paper money with "hard money." His reply was usually standard and to the effect that:

> . . . . The News does not want to see "hard money" replace paper. The News would like to see paper made par convertible into gold if anybody wants that more inconvenient form of money. If the government doesn't promise to give anything at anytime in place of the paper, how is anybody to give credit?"[34]

President Grant's annual message to Congress delivered early in December, 1874, committed his administration to the return of specie payments and The News stated:

> . . . . The President's financial views will commend themselves to all friends of sound money. Businessmen have come to recognize, almost universally, that sound money is needed to avoid the existing dangerous fluctuations in values, while laboring men are gradually getting their eyes open to the fact that all their troubles are tracable, in a large degree to the depreciated currency in which their labor is now paid for."[35]

As a result of the President's action Mr. Holliday believed that, ". . . . the hard money party is steadily growing and with the silent operation of the President and Secretary it will not be very long until public opinion will be so created and solidified as to compel another Congress to supplement the clatter and chatter of this one with definite action."[36] Furthering his arguments for a sound currency Mr. Holliday stated that:

> . . . . The great pulse-beat of our already immense and rapidly increasing internal and foreign commerce has to be fed and kept alive by a sound and substantial currency in order to insure

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[33] Indianapolis News, December 12, 1873. [34] Ibid., June 30, 1874.

[35] Ibid., December 7, 1874. [36] Ibid., December 11, 1874.

> vitality to trade, stability to our commercial transactions and permanency to our moneyed institutions.[37]

In discussing the issues of the presidental campaign of 1876, Mr. Holliday indicated his belief that returning to a sound financial basis was the first step toward reform in high offices. ". . . . If dishonest measures of inflationists are allowed to succeed and the public conscience is still further demoralized, it will be idle to talk of reform in office."[38]

So that his readers would fully understand the Resumption Acts which had been passed by Congress in 1875, Mr. Holldiay summarized what was to take place when the bill went into effect January 1, 1879. He wanted his readers to understand that:

> . . . . the greenbacks will not be retired immediately. . . . They will be equal in value in gold and will continue in circulation unless holder wishes to redeem them. Ultimately, all greenbacks which simply are promissory notes, would be redeemed and the only paper money in circulation would be bank notes. . . .Each bank would then have to redeem its own paper and other banks could not be asked or compelled to do so. Legally each bank would only have to pay gold for its own issue.[39]

The "hard money" issue became a vital point in the 1876 campaign but virtually settled itself when both party platforms came out in favor of the resumption of specie payments.

Reconstruction

Because Mr. Holliday fought in the Civil War on the Union side, one might have expected to find him holding a bitter hatred of the South, but with keen insight he reasoned that only with a rapid reconstruction program could the Union be made whole once again. When Virginia was readmitted to the Union in January of 1870, we find The News stating that the terms were,

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[37] Ibid., January 4, 1875. [38] Ibid., August 24, 1875.

[39] Ibid., July 26, 1870.

". . . . more stringent than necessary and they will probably be modified when Congressmen find the war is really over."[40] The News deplored the slowness with which Congress handled the question of Georgia returning to the Union and reported, ". . . . The Georgia question will have to solve itself for it is plain that Congress will do nothing but make speeches about it."[41] When a bill was introduced in Congress to grant general amnesty to all concerned in the rebellion except West Point and Annapolis graduates, and Congressmen, Mr. Holliday termed the idea as "absurd" and implied that all should be included.[42]

Activities of the Ku Klux throughout the Southern states greatly interested President Grant and managers of the Republican party. Mr. Holliday accused the President of using activities of that organization as an excuse for sending the army into the South to rule and punish the Southerners. ". . . . There must be no further meddling with reconstruction and the people of the South. The doctrine of amnesty has been carried too far to be ended now without materially injuring the nation."[43] The News further stated from time to time that it, ". . . . would be madness to reopen the Reconstruction issue. If the people of the South are not ready and able to govern themselves now, they never will be."[44]

Although Mr. Holliday was generally in favor of assisting the South to recover from the war, he could not always contain his feelings, and when one Southern state enacted a law to coax northern business into its boundaries by tax exemptions, The News commented on the scheme saying, ". . . . They may be offered perpetual exemption from taxation but coupled with perpetual social

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[40] Ibid., January 26, 1870.
[41] Ibid., April 13, 1870.
[42] Ibid., December 15, 1870.
[43] Ibid., January 9, 1871.
[44] Ibid., January 11, 1871.

exclusion, they will remain where they make less money but retain more character. The rebel states must reform their manners before their allurements to enterprise will have much more effect than bait on a detected trap."[45] The News editor had no use for the "Southern gentleman" and on more than one occasion commented to the effect, ". . . . A 'Southern Gentleman,' in the sense of that school, is the most utterly worthless, irreclaimedly, debauched, undeviatingly, dirty whelp to be found out of Pandemonium or the penitentiary. The name is a suggestion of pretty much everything that an honest man is not, and that a decent man detests."[46]

Mr. Holliday had no use for the "carpet bagger" government in the South and on several occasions noted, ". . . . Such wholesale corruption, such overriding of the law, and such deliberate and offensive prostitution of republican government has never been equaled not even by Tammany. No Northern state would endure this."[47] The News objected strongly when the Congress finally passed the Ku Klux bill at the request of President Grant on the grounds that it placed the South under the control of the administration. Mr. Holliday on that occasion stated, ". . . . We have never been in favor of this bayonet law and we are less in favor of it now than ever before. It gives the President too much power even in ordinary times, let alone when he is directly interested in enforcing it to secure his re-election."[48]

Preceeding the 1872 election, The News summed up President Grant's reconstruction efforts by saying:

> When Grant was elected he said, "Let us have peace." The Southern states and loyal citizens have asked for nothing more than a chance. Four years have passed and matters are worse than they were before. The South is in the hands of carpet-baggers. She has been plundered and robbed of millions. Her

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[45] Ibid., April 1, 1871.

[46] Ibid., March 22, 1871.

[47] Ibid., October 12, 1871.

[48] Iibd., June 10, 1872.

> people have been taxed to death to make unscrupulous office holders wealthy and debts of the States have been pulled up, with a recklessness that would have made a revolution if practiced in the North. The longer we delay reconciliation the dearer will be the cost. The administration of Grant has failed to give the peace it promised. A second term will provide no better results. President Grant is bound by the politicians. Can we afford this? We have much to forgive and forget just as the South has. Election of Greeley will correct these evils.[49]

During the summer of 1873, Mr. Holliday thought he could see progress in the administration's reconstruction policies and reported that, ". . . . The masses have forgotten embitterments of the war and are ready to take things as they come, fearful of the future rather than quarrelsome over the past. . . .Ex-rebels over the country are favored with position and confidence by the Republicans. The year 1872 is the last in which war issues will play a part in the elections."[50] Still later he was able to state ". . . . Jeff Davis is condemned by nearly all the Southern papers which shows the vast change of feeling that has taken place.....The 'Lost Cause' is given up as 'lost' indeed."[51] And again in February of 1874, The News proclaimed that;

> . . . . Amnesty and good feelings are progressing. The House Judiciary committee has reported in favor of paying all debts of the government contracted before the war and due to persons who participated in the rebellion. This is simple justice. A debt is a debt, no matter when contracted, and participation in after events cannot vitiate it.[52]

Further progress in reconstruction was reported when President Grant approved the suggestion that graves of the Confederate soldiers buried in the North be decorated as well as those of the Federals. Mr. Holliday believed the President's approval worth noting, ". . . . not only as a matter for Congress but as showing how rapidly the country is getting away from the bitterness of the struggle. Fact is that people are rapidly learning that

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[49] Ibid., November 1, 1872.
[50] Ibid., July 21, 1873.
[51] Ibid., August 23, 1873.
[52] Ibid., February 23, 1874.

if a country is to have permanent peace there must be no more recrimination, abuse, and censure, that soldiers on both sides were Americans and must be remembered as such."[53]

The Third Term Issue

In the fall of 1874, although the Presidental campaign of 1876 was over a full year away, Mr. Holliday became alarmed at rumors of a third term for President Grant and immediately launched a bitter attack against the possibility of such an event coming to pass. The News did not object to:

> . . . . the idea of a third term "per se" but the idea of prolongation of Grantism, a continuation of all the abuses that have marked his administration.[53]

Mr. Holliday believed:

> . . . . Grant's open, almost shameless eagerness to profit by his office, to make it a means of swelling his bank account, his subordination of public business to his own indulgence, his uniform regard of his high office as made for him, and not he for it, have offended the best Republicans in the country. So much personal offense needed only to be aggravated by the suspicion that he sought a third election to make "Grantism" a deadly element of Republicanism. Grant authorizes denials now but nobody believes them.[54]

Mr. Holliday constantly sought to keep the possibility of a third term before the public and early in 1875 reported, ". . . . Caesarism is coming to the front as a summer topic for the newspapers and politicians. Signs of the times all indicate that the third term project was never so lively and strong as it is now and that serious consideration of it was never needed more."[55]

Preceding the national Republican convention President Grant sent a letter to the chairman of the Pennsylvania Republican Convention stating

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[53]Ibid., October 17, 1874.

[54]Ibid., November 6, 1874. [55]Ibid., March 18, 1875.

that he regarded it as beneath his dignity to take notice of the third term rumor until it should be considered by a body like the convention. The News commented that,

> . . . . The President's letter is shrewd. . . .Grant says he didn't seek his first term or second. That was what the people wished. As for the third term, he says, he does not want it any more than he did the first, and in no way, shape or form would he interfere with the will of the people.[56]

During the summer of 1875, Mr. Holliday thought he noted a trend that talk of a third term for President Grant was dying and in November of that year was able to report, ". . . . If Grant is nominated again it will not be by professional politicians, a class that is beginning to distrust him, but by people who believe that they cannot nominate and elect a better man."[57]

The Election of 1876

With the third term a dead issue, The News turned its attention to the political conventions of the 1876 summer months. Mr. Holliday believed that:

> . . . . The supreme necessity of the hour in public affairs is administrative reform. This is a period that demands the highest order of statesmanship. The Republican party is entitled to singular glory of having preserved the Union from destruction, free government from overthrow, and having emancipated 4,000,000 from slavery. . . .It is now in the power of that party to eradicate a few dark spots on the record left there by unclean hands of a few of its unworth members. The News believes Benjamin H. Bristow, a native and life long resident of Kentucky, has all the great qualities demanded by the exigencies of the times. His record as a Republican is unsullied. He served as United States district attorney in Kentucky, was solicitor general in Washington, also Secretary of the Treasury. He emerged from the conflict unscathed.[58]

With this editorial Mr. Holliday started a campaign to nominate Mr. Bristow as the Republican candidate for president. The News believed that, ...

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[56] Ibid., May 31, 1875.

[57] Ibid., November 13, 1875.

[58] Ibid., May 15, 1876.

". . . .Supporters of Bristow include all men of every class in Republican party, and a good many out of the party who wish to see thieves punished, the civil service reformed, the abomination of Grantism removed, all are for Bristow."[59] Preceding the Republican convention at Cincinnati, Mr. Holliday addressed a general editorial to convention delegates cautioning them that success in November was not the first consideration, but that the selection of a presidential candidate, honest and capable, should be paramount. ". . . . One honored name after another has gone down in disgrace and ruin. The American name has been dishonored. . . .Bristow meets all requirements. His reputation is without blemish, capacity not doubted."[60]

When Rutherford B. Hayes was nominated by the Republicans at Cincinnati, Mr. Holliday believed him to be a rather negative man. To The News the nomination of Samuel J. Tilden by the Democratic convention at St. Louis came as no surprise. ". . . . He is the only representative of reform among other candidates. He has attacked corruption firmly entrenched and the Republicans will have to strain every nerve. . . .To beat Samuel J. Tilden will he no child's play."[61] Throughout the remainder of the summer and fall preceding the election, The News supported Mr. Hayes with editorials which discussed his public career in the most favorable terms and commented on occasion, ". . . . Tilden cannot give reform administration which he promised. The Democrats have been out of power too long and are hungry for office. Tilden may be actuated by the sincerest desire and purpose to reform the public service, but his efforts would be of no avail."[62] Always a "hard money" man, Mr. Holliday believed that, ". . . . Both parties favor resumption, but the Democrats want to delay it to some indefinite period when

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[59] Ibid., May 30, 1876.

[60] Ibid., June 8, 1876.

[61] Ibid., June 29, 1876.

[62] Ibid., September 5, 1876.

'times' may be more favorable. The Republicans are committed to resumption on January 1, 1879."[63]

Results of the election November 7, 1876, caused endless confusion throughout the country. Returns came in slowly from several southern and western states and The News declared, ". . . . Both parties are alternating between rapture and dejection in the past twenty-four hours. Yesterday morning the election of Tilden was conceded. Doubt and uncertainty exist today. The election has been a close one and it requires full returns to decide it positively."[64] Several days later Mr. Holliday cautioned, ". . . . People may as well understand that the results of the election will not be determined for several days and settle down to quiet. The racket and excitement of last few days are too much to be continued."[65] As delay after delay in the election returns was encountered, The News noted that, ". . . . The bitterness of party spirit, heated white by the struggles of the canvas, shows no signs of cooling among those who make politics a business. Uncertainty of result and its dependence for settlement upon the votes of South Carolina, Florida , and Louisana has intensified the passion rather than allayed it. Accusations of fraud in every conceivable shape flow with the greated freedom."[66] By December, Mr. Holliday reflected the worry of thinking people in the country and reported:

> . . . . It make little difference now whether Hayes or Tilden is elected, but it make a vast difference whether our institutions are shaken or broken, and whether confidence in our method of government is impaired. The multitude are not greatly concerned whether that power is held by the sacrifice of law. In settlement of this question then, all the reason and judicial soberness of the country are needed, and not the ebullitions of partisan joy at apparent success, without a thought of how it is gained.[67]

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[63]Ibid., October 7, 1876. [64]Ibid., November 13, 1876.

[65]Ibid., Nov. 13, 1876. [66]Ibid., Nov. 22, 1876. [67]Ibid., Dec. 8, 1876.

Greatly concerned with the disputed vote, The News spoke at length on the problem, saying:

> The question of counting the electoral vote is being discussed widely now and there is great differences of opinion, not only among heated politicians but among the quiet, thoughtful students. Strict constructionists of the constitution have always held that Congress was simply a witness to the count and the president of the Senate was simply an instrument. Those who construe it more liberally insist that Congress has judicial functions and can admit or reject the vote of every state. The latter is the Republican point of view and has been so for the past ten years.
>
> In the present case some one must settle the question which is the legal vote and which is illegal. The result is dependent upon the vote of the disputed states and the machinery is not adequate to the occasion. It will not do for either party to stand on any particular construction for each in the main has assumed the former position of the other, self interest impelling a change. There must be a compromise of some sort. The question must be referred to a separate tribunal, such as the Supreme Court or the powers of Congress must be fully defined by the two houses. There is time to do this before the counting must be done, if the people's representatives will approach the subject with the earnest purpose which the gravity of the situation demands. We dismiss entirely the theory that the president of the Senate has the power to decide upon the validity of the returns and can go behind the official certificates of the state authorities. It is wholly in conflict with the spirit of our government which nowhere places such power in the hands of any one man. Its exercise would make the president of the Senate virtually the only elector of the president.[68]

As tension continued to mount throughout the country with every delay in the count of the vote, Mr. Holliday deemed it necessary to caution:

> . . . . Any attempt to try force will result in ruin to the democracy and continued success to the Republicans. The country is in no mood to stand nonsense. Business is prostrated but will revive when the thing is settled. Any violent action will put recovery off and that is what the people do not want and will not allow.[69]

Toward the end of January, 1877, a new plan for counting the electoral vote was devised and The News commented, ". . . . The new plan for counting the electoral vote is a good one. Five members of commission will be chosen

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[68] Ibid., December 11, 1876. [69] Ibid., December 19, 1876.

from the House, five from the Senate, and five from the Supreme Court. The Court members are to be two Democrats and two Republicans, the four to select the fifth justice."[70] Although the plan did not meet with favor among the extreme elements of both parties, it was placed in effect and Mr. Holliday was able to comment:

> . . . . Opinion is rapidly crystalizing in favor of the proposed plan for counting the electoral vote. Party papers which opposed it so fiercely are modifying their tone. They are beginning to realize that they have put themselves on record as agitators at a time when such selfish policy lacks the support of the hot-headed partisanship which make it appear like patriotism during a campaign.[71]

The bill establishing the compromise plan passed the Senate on January 25, 1877,[72] and five days later The News reported that:

> . . . . President Grant has thanks of country. It detracts nothing from his prompt action in signing the bill that it was passed by a sufficently large vote to have passed it again over his veto. He gave it the moral support of his approval at a time when it was most needed, and in this way contributed largely to break any unity the opposition to it might have had.[73]

Canvass of the electoral vote started February 1, 1877, and one by one the disputed vote of various states were decided in favor of Mr. Hayes. On March 2, 1877, The News with a sigh of relief proclaimed, ". . . . The agony is over. The count is finished and Hayes and Wheeler are declared elected by one vote." Thus ended one of the greatest trials the machinery of our government has ever undergone. The matter was a closed issue as far as Mr. Holliday was concerned and he did not see fit to comment that the decision was made on a partisan basis. (The fifth justice selected was a Republican thus giving that party the majority of the commission.)

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[70] Ibid., January 18, 1877.

[71] Ibid., January 23, 1877.

[72] Ibid., January 25, 1877.

[73] Ibid., January 30, 1877.

CHAPTER VI

THE NEWS AND DOMESTIC ISSUES

Although Editor John Hampden Holliday was vitally interested in the national political field as well as all manner of problems of less importance involving the city of Indianapolis he devoted considerable time and space to many pressing domestic issues of the day. In general, his opinions continued to follow his established policy of being independent in thought and action. It is in The News editorials on domestic issues that we begin to learn that Mr. Holliday was a man of very definite opinions and once he had reached a decision on a subject he was hard to sway.[1]

Mr. Holliday had established his paper in one of the most formative periods in our country's history. His editorial columns therefore reflected his personal views on vital problems of the day as well as setting the tone for public opinion. Important domestic issues never passed without a comment from The News and Mr. Holliday expressed his opinion freely on such matters as national policy, new territories, tariff, taxes, the negro, railroads, labor, and women's rights. On occasion, he also made brief reference to crime, the Catholics, education, veterans, and Indian affairs, issues which will not be dealt with in this discussion.

National Policy

By careful study of scattered editorials printed by Mr. Holliday

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[1]Personal conversation of writer with Mr. Holliday's two daughters, Mrs. Elizabeth Hitz and Mrs. Lucia Macbeth in Indianapolis, April 23, 1947. (This is the conclusion of Mrs. Hitz and Mrs. Macbeth.)

throughout the administration of President Grant we find that The News held rather strictly to certain ideas on national policy. For example, Mr. Holliday did not believe that we needed a strong Navy and on one occasion advocated cutting down on the number of ships and personnel in order to save tax money.[2] On still another occasion when talk was running high in Washington of combining the War and Navy Departments, The News expressed the opinion that the post of the Secretary of the Navy could well be one away with.[3]

Mr. Holliday maintained a constant interest in immigrants and speaking of the rush to the United States from European countries he stated, ". . . . Let them come. The more the better. There is room enough and to spare for millions more."[4] A little over a year later, however, The News editor was beginning to worry over the problem and reported:

> . . . .Immigration has been so large since 1847 that it could not be absorbed and has remained in lumps of foreign matter in nearly all of our large cities. . . .Our political parties did not have to take special notice of the foreign element earlier. Now they have to make appeals to special groups and they have virtually created new Germanys and new Irelands here.[5]

If Mr. Holliday had lived just a few years later we might have termed him an "Isolationist" for he had no confidence in our diplomatic service and in the possibility of nations gathering together to discuss world problems. In September, 1871 he wrote:

> We are soon to have another International Convention. How futile are these projects of compounding the world with a sort of federative government made visible and operative in some form of universal tribunal. Men must change greatly and radically from what their natural dispositions modified by Christianity, make them now, before they will accept any decisions of foreign nations in their affairs. Jealousy of a foreign power is as instinctive

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[2]Indianapolis News, January 31, 1870. [3]Ibid., May 12, 1870.

[4]Ibid., May 21, 1870. [5]Ibid., September 13, 1871.

> an ineradicable a feeling as patriotism. It is a part of it in fact. The resolutions of these world bodies are of just as much force as the voluntary acquesence of a nation may give them, and no more. Very idle things are International Conventions.[6]

In 1875 after several years of watching President Grant's diplomatic appointments flounder in the courts of the world The News came to the conclusion that:

> . . . .We have no more need of diplomatists abroad than we have of negro minstrels. All the work can be done through the consuls. The steam and telegraph have superceded the embassies. It is rare that they do anything and still rarer that they de anything which could not be done just as well from the State Department at Washington. In establishing embassies the United States fell into the European habit. The whole diplomatic service is worth nothing except to give places to politicians and to send abroad some very poor specimens as examples of American culture and statesmanship.[7]

The Territories

Mr. Holliday could not be called an imperialist in any sense of the word and on numerous occasions expressed his opinion that the United States, ". . . . has no right, moral or any other to claim ground we don't own and if we acquire any more territory it will be through 'something else than right.'"[8] Most of the young editor's concern in matters of new territory was directed toward the admission of new states in the West. When a bill was introduced in Congress to make a territory of Oklahoma out of existing Indian lands, The News was, ". . . . opposed to organizing such a territory at all, but never under the outlandish name of Oklahoma. No people living there could come to any good. Man's being known as an "Oklahomaist" would ruin the nation in these days."[9] The News greeted New Mexico's residents for statehood with statements to the effect that her population, ". . . . is almost worthless, and does nothing to enrich the country. Until railroads are built through the territory it will be comparatively valueless."[10] The

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[6]Ibid., September 16, 1871.
[7]Ibid., January 8, 1875.
[8]Ibid., February 18, 1870.
[9]Ibid., March 18, 1870.
[10]Ibid., April 4, 1870.

News was quite concerned over the possibility that New Mexico and Colorado might come into the Union without meeting the proper requirements and believed:

> . . . . Neither should succeed. Colorado has half the necessary population requisite under the old standard which entitled a State to one representative in Congress and if admitted will have two Senators. It is bad policy filling up the Senate in this manner before the population is great enough to justify such representation.[11]

In the admission of these two states to the Union, Mr. Holliday saw that President Grant's administration desired it, ". . . . not because they are ready for the change but because their six electoral votes will come into good play for the next Republican presidental candidate."[12] The News with justification believed it to be:

> . . . .Unfair that a state with ten or fifteen thousand population should have as much voice in the United States Senate as New York, Pennsylvania or Indiana. The evil of taking half formed states has been demonstrated and we trust that New Mexico and Colorado remain territories for several years to come.[13]

When Colorado was admitted to the Union, the News concluded the matter by calling it a "swindle."[14]

Tariff

In matters of tariff, Mr. Holliday was known as a "free trader."[15] When the Michigan State Republican convention held in September of 1870 went on record for a low tariff policy, The News endorsed the platform stating that the tariff, ". . . . should be so adjusted as to be the least prejudicial to the industrial and producing interest of every class and section and to secure the home production a fair competition against foreign capital and labor."[16] He believed that every citizen could endorse that theory of tariff

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[11] Ibid., December 16, 1870. [12] Ibid., February 3, 1871.

[13] Ibid., December 1, 1871. [14] Ibid., June 22, 1874.

[15] Personal conversation of the writer with Hilton U. Brown, treasurer of the Indianapolis News, a business associate and personal friend of the late John H. Holliday. April 10, 1947. [16] Indianapolis News, Sept. 20, 1870.

". . . . as it covers the whole ground and leaves a wide margin around the edges. The fiercest protectionist and the most zealous free trader can unite on that ground."[17] An editorial published April 15, 1871, expresses in general terms, The News' policy on tariff.

> . . . . The question is how to distribute it (tariff) so as to benefit manufacturers as much as possible while oppressing unprotected industries as little as possible.
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> When duty on a well established manufacture is fixed a point that excludes foreign competition altogether, it fosters combination of manufacturers to keep up prices, to the very highest point that will still be low enough to bar out competition which carries the duty on top of it.[18]

As the tariff question became an issue in the political campaigns of 1873, Mr. Holliday believed that the day was not yet near when political parties would be built up on the issue between free trade and protection. He advocated the middle course in any discussion of tariff stating:

> . . . . There is a neutral ground between the extremes of free trade and absolute protection, on which the greatest nourishment is afforded the industries and developments of a country as new and diversified as this. Too great a tendency to free trade starves; too great a tendency to protection surfeits. Competition is the life blood of trade. The tendency must be toward free trade as we have gone too far into the matter of protection.[19]

Taxes

Throughout the entire administration of President Grant, The News displayed its independent policy by constantly advocating lower taxes in both local and national government fields. Regardless of party platforms Mr. Holliday held firmly to the theory that with the end of the war should come general reductions in taxes in all fields of government. That this reduction was often hampered by the great need for reform, he full well realized and time and time again demanded reform in order to accomplish a

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[17] Ibid. [18] Ibid., April 15, 1871.. [19] Ibid., April 25, 1873.

reduction in the tax load. Although an advocate of lower taxes, Mr. Holliday opposed an attempt to reduce income taxes believing that, ". . . . So long as we have an excise system the income tax should exist, for it is founded upon the principle which should govern all taxation, viz., to levy were the greatest amount can be realized and the least burden inflicted."[20]

When the national debt statement was released in June, 1870, showing a reduction of $12,000,000, The News expressed the hope, ". . . . not to see another such statement. Taxes should be reduced instead and interest paid on the debt."[21] In September of the same year, The News commended the administration on reduction of the public debt in one month by $13,402,324 as a, ". . . . most excellent showing. But we should like to see the reduction of taxation commence soon."[22] The excise tax to Mr. Holliday was, ". . . . an odious, meddling tax, a prying impertinent and annoying tax, and best that can be made of it is bad enough."[23] By the end of 1872, Mr. Holliday was confident that, ". . . . Tax-payers need not look for any relief or reform from the Grant Republicans. The Liberals are pledged to work for them and the chance is far greater that they will do something while the others think there is no hope."[24]

Mr. Holliday's constant desire for reduction of taxes caused him to search for new sources of government revenue so as to reduce the general over-all tax load and in the fall of 1873 he started a campaign for the taxation of church and educational properties. He believed that:

> . . . . Common sense holds that all private property should be taxed on the same level. The only argument we have ever heard is the service rendered by church to public morals and consequently

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[20] Ibid., May 26, 1870.

[21] Ibid., July 2, 1870.

[22] Ibid., September 2, 1870.

[23] Ibid., September 20, 1871.

[24] Ibid., September 1, 1872.

> to public order and safety. It is not an argument. If we may exempt churches for supposed or real services to public peace and purity, we may exempt pork houses for the same reason. Services to the public morals rendered by private associations are just as intangible and impossible of estimation as the services of any man who furnishes support for the needy or provides comfortable houses for the suffering, for a reasonable return. Church accumulations are yet an unnoticed, or slightly noticed evil here, but we are doing our best to make it big and obtrusive by our unwise and unfair exemption of church property from taxation.[25]

The News further believed that, ". . . . Churches represent expressions of private opinion and a church has no right to claim tax exemption than any other private organization. . . .All private property should be taxed, unless an exception be made of such as devoted expressly and entirely to public service."[26]

Late in August of 1874 a decision by Chicago to tax Northwestern University caused The News to comment that the decision:

> . . . . was sound and righteous. It holds private property employed for educational uses subject to taxation like other private property and this is right against all pleading of moral services. . . .A college that makes students play for tuition, a school that sends quarterly bills to parents, a church that provides itself a house for the enjoyment of its peculiar doctrines and services, is just as much a fair subject of taxation as a machine shop or a pork house.[27]

The News consistently advocated low taxes in the city of Indianapolis as a means of attracting new businesses and residents to the city.[28] ". . . . Greatest inducement Indianapolis can offer now is low taxes. . . .She has many advantages for trade and manufacturers that if low taxes which mean good government as well could be guaranteed, the additions to the business and population would be very large."[29] Mr. Holliday was somewhat discouraged with his efforts to reduce taxes in April of 1876 and he wrote,

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[25]Ibid., November 1, 1873.

[26]Ibid., February 7, 1874.

[27]Ibid., August 26, 1874.

[28]Ibid., January 6, 1876.

[29]Ibid., January 25, 1876.

". . . . Within the last five years taxes have been quadrupled. They are likely to increase about as fast during the next five."[30]

The Negro

The problem of the newly freed negro, both locally and as a national issue, was constantly before the public during the administration of President Grant and Mr. Holliday was quite concerned with every effort to advance the race. He often, however, found himself torn between the natural desire for justice for the colored man and the social questions which were developing during the aftermath of the Civil War. When the Fifteenth Amendment was ratified, Mr. Holliday commented that he, ". . . . hopes someone brave enough will advocate suffrage based upon intelligence or better still if combined with 'no representation without taxation.'"[31] With the adoption of the amendment giving the vote to negro citizens it was natural that there would be a bitter protest from the ranks of the Democratic party whose strength lay in the Southern States. Many dire predictions and threats came from those quarters and Mr. Holliday was led to comment:

> . . . . Horrible effects of adoption of the fifteenth amendment as predicted by the Democrats are already visible. A Kentucky farmer committed suicide rather than vote beside a black. . . . If every man who has sworn never to vote beside a nigger kills himself, it would be a good speculation for someone to lay out a new cemetery here.[32]

When a colored cadet was admitted to West Point Academy and received ill treatment at the hands of the Plebes, The News stated that, ". . . . it is a national disgrace that any boy, white or black, should be subjected to treatment common at West Point and if that institution is to be maintained it is time a reformation commenced."[33] In issues involving the admittance

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[30]Ibid., April 11, 1876.

[31]Ibid., March 31, 1870.

[32]Ibid., April 18, 1870.

[33]Ibid., August 15, 1870.

of negro children to public schools, Mr. Holliday was torn between the desire to observe what the law required and what was the right course for the negroesto follow in mixing with the whites. In a case involving a suit brought against school trustees demanding the admittance of a colored girl to a public school The News commented:

> . . . . If the father wins case he would be wise to let right be abstraction for a while. Prejudice born of slavery is not yet dead. . . .The negro is equal before the law and public institutions, as they should be, but mixed they should not be, at least by legal or social compulsion. . . .We have no faith in the radicalism that insists on association as a duty. It is sheer folly and worse it is sheer cruelty to the negro.[34]

The News had further comment on the same subject when the Superintendent of Public Instruction in Louisiana issued orders for the admission of colored and white children to the same school and stated, ". . . . It is a bad step at this time, at any rate, and will do the cause of popular education much harm."[35]

Although he campaigned for negro rights, Mr. Holliday realized the evils of placing too much of a burden on the negro before he was qualified to accept his responsibilities in government and society. Matters in the South caused him to observe, ". . . . The evils of admitting a large body of uneducated men to share in the government are becoming apparent in South Carolina where the negro population is greater than the white. In the northern counties a reign of lawlessness exists and crime is committed with impunity."[36] Concerning activities of negroes in politics, The News believed:

> . . . . a single silly choice of a negro officer does his race more harm than all the Ku Klux could do. . . .Common sense indicates the wisdom of leaving the colored race, for a time on

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[34]Ibid., September 20, 1870. [35]Ibid., January 13, 1871.

[36]Ibid., April 10, 1871.

> the level of legal equality until they get used to it. . . .Let them become acquainted with our political customs and offices before we start electing them to posts. The Republicans are making color a consideration and are doing mischief by it.[38]

Talk of an effort, by the Democrats, to repeal the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments led The News to comment that such an undertaking could never be accomplished.[37] Following the election of 1872, complaints of colored citizens to the effect that they were not being fairly treated in the distribution of offices let Mr. Holliday to publich the following editorial.

The Rising of the Colored Man

> A large number of colored men are complaining that they are not fairly treated; that they are ignored in the distribution of offices; that they have not civil rights and social privileges. The feeling is more wide spread than one would imagine. It is certain that colored men have not been treated with consideration due their numbers in the distribution of offices. They gave the Republican party its majority last year. The negroes trained in a bad school are anxious to take a hand in dividing the spoils of offices. They imitate. They have no conception of politics in the higher sense of regulating and providing good government. To them it is a fight for a grab-bag and the fellows who get it divides. The colored man needs a fair chance to grow and to improve.[38]

Mr. Holliday deplored the collisions between the white and black races which occurred with alarming frequency throughout 1874, and wrote:

> . . . . It looks as if the whites are arraying themselves and forcing the negros to be arrayed in an implacable war of races. If it is so, the fate of the South is sealed. . . .This nigger war is the worst stroke of policy they have every made. Business will shun a region infested with a war of races as widely as a scalded child will shun fire.[39]

Concerning the stories arriving daily in his office of the bloody outbreaks in the South, Mr. Holliday found it:

> . . . . queer that we always hear of the arrest of the leaders of the negros and never of the whites. Negros always begin the trouble, so say the reports. . . .We suppose it is true, but may we suggest that it is queer that the negros should be quarrelsome and bloodthirsty, and the whites so long suffering and humble.[40]

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[37] Ibid., April 27, 1871.

[38] Ibid., September 1, 1873.

[39] Ibid., August 27, 1874.

[40] Ibid., August 31, 1874. (Mr. Holliday consistantly spelled negroes without the letter "e.")

The News consistently held the opinion that most of the trouble in the South was caused by the fact that:

> . . . . A very large proportion of people of the rebel states are not reasoning men. They give their prejudices full sway against the dictates of reason and their prejudice against the negro as a fellow citizen, and an equal sharer of political rights, is the master of all their prejudices. They cannot feel they have anything as long as negro has it. To divide with him is to lose all. To see him as a voter is to see them degraded into his servants. All over Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, South Carolina, West Tennessee, and Kentucky a negro is little safer than a hunted fox. He is murdered without scruple and almost without concealment.[41]

Although the trouble continued throughout the remainder of President Grant's administration, The News seemed to lose interest in the problem in favor of more pressing issues.

Railroads

The period following the Civil War was one of great expansion for the railroads, and each year saw them ever pushing their rails westward. Rail lines through communities meant communication with industries of other areas and many concessions were granted to induce roads to bring their lines to cities. Many abuses arose from this practice over a period of great expansion and The News adopted the attitude of maintaining a constant watch on the railroad industry in order to protect "the people." On many different occasions, Mr. Holliday, ". . . . deplored the excessive donation of private land for railroads. . . .This capital could be invested to greater advantage. Land should be sold cheaply to settlers wanting homes and not to 'soulless monopolies.'"[42] Mr. Holliday also believed that, ". . . .There is such a thing as having too many railroads and having them built too rapidly."[43] Although The News watched the railroad industry with a very critical eye,

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[41]Ibid., August 31, 1874. [42]Ibid., February 21, 1870.

[43]Ibid., May 21, 1870.

it tried to be fair and on occasion praised the action of certain roads for their management. ". . . . The managers of the Terre Haute and Indianapolis Railroad have made it one of the best in the country. . . .Good sense and fairness and no effort to conceal facts on accidents are to their credit."[44]

Mr. Holliday struck hard at an attempt of Eastern railroads to form a "pool" for the division of their earnings when he published an editorial advocating government regulation. He stated,

> No good to the public will come out of the convention of prominent railroad men in session at Erie. The meeting has been called to discuss the pooling and division of earnings of the roads represented. This type of evil is growing rapidly and throwing America out of competition with other countries. The rapid strides of railroad monopolists, and their overpowering selfishness, threatens to paralyze trade, destroy what little commerce we have left, and to materially retard the progress of the whole country.
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> A few unscrupulous men who obtain possession of the leading lines of road, may now injure the business interest and credit of the whole country to an extent from which it requires years to recover and one can hinder or hold them responsible. They cannot and must not last.[45]

The News continued to display the anxiety of its editor over the enormous growth and grasping nature of the railroad monopolies when it stated that, ". . . . The problem of how to adjust these vast and complicated interests and prevent them from obtaining undue power is not attracting the best thought in the country."[46]

When the narrow gauge railroad was introduced into this country from Europe, the idea struck Mr. Holliday's fancy and after investigation of its merits he advocated that it be given a fair trial. The News promoted the idea of trying the new idea saying that, ". . . . Narrow gauge track is

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[44] Ibid., June 23, 1870.

[45] Ibid., December 21, 1870.

[46] Ibid., March 2, 1871.

cheaper, equipment is smaller, therefore cheaper. It is good for high speed. The advantages of the narrow lines are so obvious that we shall be surprised if they do not supercede the others in all new railway enterprises."[47] Mr. Holliday believed that the narrow gauge lines capable of handling all railroad traffic in Indiana and thought that, ". . . . It would probably pay most of the twelve lines centering here to change tracks to three feet and lose all their rolling stock. The cost of narrow track, ready for service, is but little more than half of the ordinary gauges."[48] When the Denver and Rio Grande narrow gauge railroad was completed as the first road of its kind in this country, The News commented that, ". . . . It makes a good show of earnings, which it is claimed are equal to the earnings of many broad gauge roads costing twice as much."[49]

In the late fall of 1872, Mr. Holliday in one of his endeavours to find new sources of taxes discovered that most of the railroads in the state were being taxed under old appraisements made when the roads were small and had few tracks and little equipment. The News, in characteristic fashion, blasted forth that;

> . . . . The three features of the system of railroad appraisements in this state which possess the merit of being the very worst ever embodied in a law on the face of the earth, where any pretense of fairness was made, are low appraisement of tracks and real estate which allows the companies to escape with a tax not exceeding one-twentieth of their just burden, the right of a railway company to appeal to the State Board of Equalization to reduce an appraisement obviously low as nearly all are now, and the inability of the State to appraise and thus obtain just revenue from railroads completed and put into operation in the intervals between quinquennial appraisements.[49]

To further emphasize his point concerning reapparising the railroad properties in Indiana, Mr. Holliday pointed out to his readers that, ". . . . The total

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[49] Ibid., November 30, 1872.

appraisement of 1871 is $11,228,149. This is not one tenth nor one twelfth of the fair value. . . .In 1860 the value of railroad property was over $70,000,000. It has doubled since that time and is now about $160,000,000. Yet it is taxed at $11,000,000."[50]

By the summer of 1873, having won his point and forced the State Tax Board to reappraise the Indiana roads, Mr. Holliday was able to write with a great deal of satisfaction that:

> We learn that the railroad companies or many of them, are dissatisfied with the appraisements made by the State Board and want a revision, a rehearing, or some such device to get a reduction. They complain grievously. We hope they may get just what they deserve. Ever since they have had an existence they have cheated the State in taxes in such a fashion that honest taxpayers have had ten percent added to their burden. They have cheated openly and infamously. The present mode of appraising railroad property strikes us as it must strike everybody, as eminently fair. Main tracks, not side tracks, rolling stock, and capital stock in excess of the cost of the road and equipment are the sole subjects of taxation. The taxes quadruple the total of last year and that goes far in making the roads bear some fair proportion of their burden. We hope they may be held to every cent put on them. The come for relief with their hands dirty with fraud, and have little claim to anything.[51]

Labor

Mr. Holliday's attitude toward labor, while one of fairness, might be said to be typical of many leaders of the period, that is, anti-organized labor. On occasion of strikes throughout the nation his comment usually followed the pattern that in the end the strikers would loose in wages, savings, and probably their jobs. On occasion of a strike of the cotton spinners in New England, Mr. Holliday wrote that:

> . . . . The recent strike is another proof of inefficiency of such movements to redress any real or fancied greivances. The operators were out of work two months, lost wages amounting to more than $500,000 and the suffering and privation endured was great. . . .A little moderation and forbearance would in ninety-cases out of a hundred, prevent a resort to such arbitrary

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[50] Ibid., January 29, 1873. [51] Ibid., July 15, 1873.

measures as strikes.[52]

Even in those early days, Mr. Holliday reflected the opinion of many a present day editor when he stated his belief that, ". . . . The suspension of work chiefly injures the miners who are generally a very ignorant class of men under the control of a few leaders."[53] At various times during labor troubles in widely scattered parts of the country, The News advocated that men dissatisfied with their present jobs or employers, ". . . . quit and go to work for themselves."[54] Mr. Holliday was not adopting the attitude of "work or else," but was pointing out that many workmen , skilled in certain crafts, were forming their own small companies and working for themselves such as a group of shoemakers had done at North Amdams, Mass.[55] Although not too practical, Mr. Holliday was sincere in his belief that workmen could start their own business should they wish to do so.

During the administration of President Grant, the trade union movement caused the News much concern and in January of 1873, Mr. Holliday wrote,

> Some of our workmen's associations have combined to resist the unjust exercise of power by employers and thus coming to a knowledge of their own power, they have opened access to a very natural impulse of our imperfect nature, the impulse to govern, to make others go when we say go, and come when we bid it, and to the inseparably associated impulse, to make money of it. From combinations of defense they have developed into combinations of offense. They not only insist on fixing wages without regard to wishes of employers but insist on controlling his private arrangements, restrict the number of apprentices, restrict the acquisition of trades, the resources of intelligence and poverty both, and enforce the very meddling that impelled their own existence. They will kill the "goose that laid the golden egg." A trade union fairly conducted is beneficial alike to the employer and employee. In come trade unions this power is abused.[56]

As previously indicated, Mr. Holliday was troubled by strike difficulties in the News plant during 1874. On occasion of the start of the strike

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[52]Ibid., September 20, 1870. [53]Ibid., April 10, 1871.

[54]Ibid., June 12, 1871. [55]Ibid., Dec. 23, 1870. [56]Ibid., Jan. 9, 1873.

by the Typographical Union of Indianapolis The News stated that:

> . . . . We are sorry this strike has occurred, for we depreciate strikers in general and domestic strikes in particular. The union in seeking to enforce its demands apparently through wanton attempt to show strength and to annoy morning papers, passed a limit beyond which it became a matter of life and death for papers. . . .The Union demands an increase at a time when thousands of men in other trades are not earning a dollar and thousands of others are glad to work at one half pay.[57]

Thus the die was cast and the issue brought about a change in Mr. Holliday's attitude toward trade unions in general. When the bricklayers union in Indianapolis declared their intention to allow no many to lay brick in the city unless he was a member of the union The News commented that:

> ...Such situations as these are making unions odious and powerless. Common sense will endure no such mad usurpation or interference with natural rights. . . .Every man has the right to work at wages offered or to let it alone and to combine inresistance to oppression of any kind, but he has no right to interfere with those who do not belong to his union or recognize its authority.[58]

During the early months of 1874, while the printers' strike continued in Indianapolis, out-of-town men were employed to print the papers and Mr. Holliday continued his attack on trade unions in general. He wrote that, ". . . . Trade unions are generally controlled by a half dozen individuals who use the rest as cats' paw for their own profit. In time of strike the majority are left to suffer while the favored few who 'manage' and always keep the funds, draw good pay, better than they could probably make at the trade."[59] (The reader might read between the lines and see Mr. Holliday's effort to split the opposition and cause trouble between the strikers and their leaders). In combating the printers strike, Mr. Holliday used the argument that, ". . . . Without capital we can have no employment for more workmen than will supply domestic demand. Make capital unsafe, or think

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[57] Ibid., February 2, 1874. [58] Ibid., February 6, 1874.

[59] Ibid., February 11, 1874.

itself unsafe, and we shall not only get no more of it here, but we shall lose what we have."[60] For a time during the strike, The Union was published by the strikers in opposition to The News but it caused the latter publication little concern and soon went out of business. In April, in a cheerful tone, The News was able to report that, ". . . . The remnant of the Typographical Union has voted to reduce the scale of prices to the rate prevailing before the strike, an absolute confession of the injustice of its increase, and a justification of the action of the non-complying employers."[61] This latter opinion probably resulted from Mr. Holliday'sstrike-breaking efforts which forced the union to come to terms.

Women's Rights

Mr. Holliday's attitude toward the women's suffrage movement which gained great strength during the administration of President Grant was one of amusement and whenever he wrote of the movements leaders it was with the "tongue in cheek" attitude. When enfranchised women began to serve on juries in Wyoming, Mr. Holliday commented that:

> . . . . It is refreshing to see the women taking up their burden so readily, and nothing but a determined rush to arms on the occasion of the next Indian attack is necessary to convince everybody that they are thoroughly inearnest. The women who will serve as jurors certainly will not refuse to fight "Injuns."[62]

When the situation demanded it, Mr. Holliday could be serious on the subject of suffrage as he was when he wrote:

The Rights of Women

> The question of Woman Suffrage has never been presented in this State, but doubtless a constitutional amendment will be presented some day or there will be a discussion of the sixteenth amendment. Whenever it is proposed to give women equal rights we hope this question will be fully and freely discussed. All

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[60] Ibid., February 12, 1874. [61] Ibid., April 27, 1874.

[62] Ibid., March 8, 1870.

> we ask is a fair showing for the men. The ladies have all the advantages so far and if they will consent to give up their privileges it might pay to let them vote. The law protects women's interests at the expense of men under the Indiana law. If the Constitution is to be amended in one particular, it ought to be in all, so that the sexes might be placed upon an equal footing.[63]

Not all of Mr. Holliday's editorials concerning women had to do with the suffrage movement. On one occasion he took considerable space to comment a New Orleans man who upon being whipped by a woman seized a hammer and hit her in the head. The News on that occasion advocated that, ". . . . other men should dare to follow his example and if attack by women be not deterred by false consideration for the sex from larruping them well."[64] On still another occasion when a woman was freed by a Wheeling, West Virginia jury after she has shot a man, Mr. Holliday wailed, ". . . . Let Mrs. Stanton (Elizabeth Cody) and Susan B. Anthony give the key and we'll all join in raising a psalm of thanksgiving."[65] (The latter two women were leaders of the Women's Suffrage movement in the United States.) Mr. Holliday could not be serious about the subject of women's rights for long periods at a time and his better editorials on the subject would be inter-spaced with quips such as, ". . . . Joy for the Revolution and the women suffragists generally. Two women voted in Michigan yesterday. The country's safe now."[66] The editor of The News was serious however, when he wrote:

> . . . . Women voting endanger family relations. Men and women who encounter each other and resist each other's interest or inclinations at the polls, will feel towards each other very much as men do now. There is not one husband in a hundred that will see his ticket beaten by his wife's vote, and not make a row about it. If women suffrage becomes an appreciable influence in our elections, not a mere appendage to the male vote, but an independent power, it will make more family quarrels than anything the Devil has discovered yet, except liquor.[67]

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[63] Ibid., April 6, 1870. [64] Ibid., Oct. 3, 1870. [65] Ibid., Nov.,12, 1870.

[66] Ibid., April 4, 1871. [67] Ibid., November 10, 1871.

Mr. Holliday fairly well summed up his attitude on women's rights when he wrote:

> The News in not an advocate nor a believer in woman suffrage. It does believe however in raising women up, in opening up such avenues of business as their sex does not qualify them from entertaining. It believes in paying them just as much for their services as a man would receive.[68]

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[68] Ibid., February 10, 1872.

CHAPTER VII

THE NEWS AND FOREIGN RELATIONS

The period covered by the administration of President Ulysses S. Grant was one with a multiplicity of troublesome domestic issues and crises which left little room for attention to foreign affairs. Several important problems arose during this period, however, which caused Mr. Holliday considerable anxiety. As has been previously indicated, The News editor was not very favorably impressed by our government's diplomatic service and no doubt this attitude colored his views when discussing the neutrality of the United States during the Franco-Prussian war, President Grant's desire to annex San Domingo, the settlement of the Alabama claims, the Spanish war against the rebels in Cuba, and proposals for the construction of a canal across the Isthmus of Panama in Central America.

The Franco-Prussian War

Mr. Holliday's comments on the Franco-Prussian War, although sparce, reflected largely the attitude of the administration and many Americans. Sympathy in the United States was largely with the Prussians. Many Americans regarded the Gallic race with a tinge of contempt. During the Civil War, Napoleon's hostility to the North, threats of French intervention, and French bayonets supporting Maximilian in Mexico, were resentfully remembered.[1] The large German population in major cities including Indianapolis also was a factor to be reckoned with.

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[1] Allen Nevins, Hamilton Fish, (Mean and Company, 1936, New York, N. Y.) p. 400.

The News believed the French people to be, ". . . . children in government matters."[2] Mr. Holliday also expressed the opinion that, ". . . . With a people distracted and divided, troops raw, poorly armed and turbulent with no firey zeal, intense energy and firm union such as lifted the nation out of the perils of 1792, we can see nothing ahead for France but the completest of defeats and the enforcement by Prussia of terms much more rigorous than those she now demands."[3] It was not until several protests were made to Washington by the Prussian government over the sale of surplus Civil War arms to the French that The News was stirred to comment strongly on the war in Europe. Mr. Holliday stated with firmness that, ". . . . We must keep out of these troubles. The administration must do its duty and prevent vessels sailing from the United States for aid to France."[4] At that time private interests had a right to sell arms to either of the belligerent nations but the question of neutrality arose when it was determined that many ships were sailing for France with arms from the United States government arsenals.[5]

Mr. Holliday wrote several articles on the subject of the United States neutrality in the Franco-Prussian war and in January of 1871 was able to report to his readers that, ". . . . Grant has at last determined to take steps toward enforcing strict neutrality and has ordered that no more sales of ordinance and ordinance stores shall be made to agents of foreign governments."[6]

San Domingo

While Mr. Holliday did not show much interest in the war between France and Prussia his bitterness toward the administration of President

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[2]Indianapolis News, September 26, 1870. [3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid., October 12, 1870. [5]Nevins, op. cit., p. 403.

[6]Indianapolis News, January 25, 1871.

Grant caused him to view with alarm the preparations by the government to annex San Domingo. As early as 1869 American speculators became vitally interested in San Domingo and its natural wealth. They look forward to the day when the United States would annex the island and thereby increase the value of their holdings. These speculators were to be found throughout eastern business circles and in the administration itself, so that it was only natural that pressure was brought to bear on President Grant to regard the annexation scheme with favor.[7]

When the project was finally broached in Congress, Mr. Holliday wrote that, ". . . . The country does not need any more naval bases. . . .It is time the idea that the United States is sort of a hospital for broken down countries, and a refuge for all the worthless people of the globe was exploded."[8] When the Senate defeated a treaty providing for the annexation of San Domingo, The News expressed the hope that President Grant would drop all annexation schemes and attend to more important business. ". . . . This sort of jobbing business of which the above is a good specimen is not particularly becoming to the president of the United States."[9] As President Grant persisted in his plans to annex the island, The News expressed the opinion of the president that, ". . . . His judgement must be blinded to a wonderful degree, for anyone can see that the only benefit derived will go to a ring of speculators and jobbers."[10] Mr. Holliday's ire rose as efforts for the annexation continued and he directed his anger at the President saying, ". . . . Why does Grant try to force annexation of San Domingo on the country when he sees that it is opposed to it. Is he interested in it pecuniarily, or does he think he is king of this country and we are his slaves?"[11]

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[7]Nevins, op. cit., p. 252.

[8]Indianapolis News, March 19, 1870.

[9]Ibid., July 1, 1870.

[10]Ibid., December 21, 1870.

[11]Ibid., December 22, 1870.

As more facts came to light that men close to President Grant were interested financially in the annexation scheme, Mr. Holliday wrote, ". . . . We regard it as a job of the worst character and even the President's skirts are not free from the taint. If he is free from any pecuniary interest in the matter, he has some strong motive for wishing its success and that motive will come out sooner or later."[12] When the Senate authorized the appointment of commissioners to visit San Domingo and report back as to their findings Mr. Holliday expressed a hope that, ". . . . everything would be probed to the bottom."[13] Informed that the commissioners were strongly in favor of annexation, Mr. Holliday reported, ". . . . Of course they are. How could they be otherwise. That is what they were sent for."[14] By the latter part of March of 1871, The News took on a more hopeful tone and stated that, ". . . . We believe the scheme to be dead. Annexation failed because it was wanted chiefly for the President's use."[16] However, a few days later Washington news dispatches indicated that the San Domingo commissioners were finishing their report and would soon present it to Congress. Mr. Holliday was of the opinion that, ". . . . The news will be a disappointment to many who have been confident that General Grant would drop the scheme. He doesn't give up easy." The News dropped the annexation matter until the fall of 1871 when Mr. Holliday announced that, ". . . . The San Domingo project is to be revived in the approaching session of Congress. We don't want San Domingo under any circumstances whatever and the administration that attempts to force it on the country will make a ruinous mistake."[16] The matter was finally dropped when President Grant saw that the Republican party was splitting over the issue and that much of the country was opposed to the scheme.

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[12]Ibid., December 24, 1870. [13]Ibid., January 16, 1871.

[14]Ibid., March 13, 1871. [15]Ibid., March 31, 1871. [16]Ibid., Oct. 14, 1871.

The Alabama Claims

The long delayed and much debated case of the Alabama claims, involving the United States and England since the closing days of the Civil War, was revived by the administration in the fall of 1870. The case, involving claims of the United States against England for permitting the Alabama, a British-built ship, to escape and prey upon Union shipping during the rebellion, attracted a great deal of attention throughout the world. The ship had been permitted to sail contrary to international law and Queen Victoria's proclamation of neutrality, and upon these factors the United States based its claim. Settlement of the claims would probably determine the future courses of action taken by nations in times of war.

Commenting on the Alabama case, Mr. Holliday stated that, ". . . . The theory is gaining that a nation must be held responsible, not only for what she does herself, but for whatever results from her action, although unintential and unlooked for."[17] He further believed that, ". . . . It is a dangerous question to leave open and the longer it is left unadjusted the more dangerous does it become to England."[18] When The News received word that the Joint High Commission on the Alabama claims, meeting in Washington, might fail, Mr. Holliday felt that:

> . . . .The English Commissioners will probably deny responsibility for the Alabama depredations which in effect would mean the rule of neutrality is discarded by England, We hope so. We trust that we may run clear out of this 'neutrality' business. Following England's action we may see the day when the ruins of English commerce may plaster the Atlantic ocean. The less intimate our intercourse and the less dependent our trade is upon England, the better for us.[19]

The News, throughout the entire negotiations, held firmly to the belief that, ". . . . A more wanton robbery was never practiced under heaven,

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[17] Ibid., November 17, 1870. [18] Ibid., December 12, 1870.

[19] Ibid., March 21, 1871.

than the Alabama business, and its object is seen in its effect, the transfer to England of the bulk of our shipping. It's not our 'funeral.' If England wants the rule of the Alabama precedent retained it's her affair. It won't hurt us to leave it as it is."[20] By May of 1871, Mr. Holliday was able to write that, ". . . . The Joint High Commission has signed the treaty. It has affirmed the responsibility of neutral powers for depredations of privateers fitted out in their ports and escaping through any lack of 'due dilligence;' has provided the settlement, under this rule, of damages inflicted upon us by English privateers during the rebellion and has made this class of claims a separate and higher order of liability than those resulting from the ordinary casualties of war, by providing that all other claims of either party shall be settled at a different place by a different commission."[21]

The site of Geneva, Switzerland, was selected for meeting places of the new commissioners to settle the Alabama claims. When Charles Francis Adams was appointed as the American Commissioner, The News commended the, ". . . . judicious selection."[22] As the negotiations proceded at Geneva, Mr. Holliday condemned the English for demanding indemnification for blockade runners captured by the Union navy by saying that, ". . . . There is no other nation on earth that would have thought of asking a nation to pay for vessels used in the support of her enemy and the prolongation of a ruinous war. . . .If anybody knows of an instance in history, legend, or romance, surpassing this claim we should like to be informed of it."[23] Throughout the fall of 1871 and the summer of 1872, the negotiations were on at Geneva, but finally a break occurred in the numerous deadlocks and in

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[20] Ibid., March 28, 1871.

[21] Ibid., May 12, 1871.

[22] Ibid., August 2, 1871.

[23] Ibid., September 19, 1871.

July of that summer, The News took on an optimistic tone and reported that, ". . . . After many years the differences of England and the United States are in a fair way of settlement."[24] When full settlement of the Alabama claims was reached and the United States received the sum of $12,000,000 ($3,000,000 was paid to England in settlement of her claims in the case), Mr. Holliday stated that:

> . . . .It is a lesson to maritime powers to 'watch their corners' and avoid the temptation to profit by a rival's misfortunes, when that profit has to be made by what is no better than war outright and little better than piracy. It looks like the introduction of a new era of international conduct and the first grey streak of the new dawn heralding the day when 'swords are to be beaten into plowshares and the nations learn war no more.'[25]

The War In Cuba

Since October of 1868, when a rebel government in Cuba had issued a Declaration of Independence, many Americans had eyed the war between the islanders and the mother country Spain with increasing concern. Many for various reasons, patriotic and economic, advocated intervention. Throughout the course of the war, The News maintained a friendly policy toward the island people. Mr. Holliday regretted the attempts of some papers, mainly the New York Herald, to embroil us in a war with Spain and advocated on several occasions that we deal with Cuba officials instead of with Spanish representatives.[26] It was not until the Virginius, an American merchant vessel engaged in the business of carrying arms to Cuban rebels, was captured on November 5, 1873 by the Tornado, a Spanish gunboat, that The News became deeply concerned with the insurrection in Cuba. Spanish authorities had executed fifty-three members of the ships crew as "pirates" when the arrival of a British warship, the Niobe, put a stop to further executions.

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[24]Ibid., July 24, 1872.

[25]Ibid., September 12, 1872.

[26]Ibid., February 10, 1873.

When news of the affair reached the United States, the anger of the country mounted and in Indianapolis Mr. Holliday called loudly for, ". . . . wholesome adomintion of the authorities (Cuban) and that if they won't mind their own government we'll have to make them act decently at least."[27]

The capture of the Virginius fired the immagination of the American people and the demand for war against Spain grew rapidly. Mr. Holliday believed that, ". . . .It is a good time for these friends to stop and think before they begin a war. Above all other questions of legal right, etc., are we ready to go to war? An army could be raised but the war will be largely naval. . . .We have eight ships and 2,000 men. . . .Spain's Cuban squadron alone numbers forty-four ships. While our navy gets ready she could devastate half the ports in the country."[28] Mr. Holliday was quick to praise the administration's calmness and coolness in handling the Virginius difficulty and stated that, ". . . . While there is a firm intention not to abate one jot or tittle of national dignity, the complication is to be treated in a just and legal manner. The government is not to be forced into a needless war by the blatherskiting freedom shriekers, speculators in Cuban bonds, and the seekers after notoriety and spoils who demand blood so vindictively."[29] The News commended the administration again when word was received that the Spanish government would surrender the Virginius and the surviving prisoners.[30] The matter was finally settled when Spain agreed to render an apology to the United States flag on Christmas Day, 1873 and the payment of $80,000 in damages to families of the executed sailors.[31] Following the Virginius affair the Spanish war against the Cuban rebels continued to

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[27]Ibid., November 14, 1873.

[28]Ibid., November 18, 1873.

[29]Ibid., November 25, 1873.

[30]Ibid., November 29, 1873.

[31]Ibid., October 24, 1874.

cause the United States trouble, but Mr. Holliday followed his original policy of advocating careful thought on the part of the people before they started talking war.

The Canal

The question of a canal between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans was of interest to thinking men in the United States even before the days of the "forty-nine" gold rush and from time to time the idea was discussed by various business and governmental groups. It was toward the close of President Grant's second administration that considerable interest was aroused throughout the country over the possibility of constructing a canal between the two oceans at the Isthmus of Panama or elsewhere in Central America. Mr. Holliday received the proposal with calmness and reported the facts to his readers without editorial comment for or against the project. He believed that, ". . . . The Government has expended a good deal of money in surveying various routes and preliminary information necessary to the choice ought to be ready. . . .The governments of Columbia, Nicaragua, and Tehuantepec are anxious that the United States has precedence in the matter but if not proposals will be made to them by France and England."[32] When a board of commissioners reported in favor of a Nicaraugan canal route, The News expressed the opinion that the choice was wise by saying that:

> . . . .A canal can be built for $60,000,000. The line of the proposed canal will be commenced at San Juan Del Norte or Greytown, a point on the Carribean Sea. The course of the canal extends in the general direction of the river for about twenty miles and then traversing it to Port San Carlos, at the foot of Lake Nicaragua. The route traverses the lake about seventy miles and gains the small port of Brito on the Pacific, by a canal and system of locks, the low range of intervening hills being less than fifty feet above the level of the lake at that place.[33]

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[32] Ibid., November 1, 1875. [33] Ibid., December 1, 1875.

Approximately one year later, in an editorial that cast its shadow into future years, Mr. Holliday wrote that, ". . . . The attention of Europe has been turned to the prospect of a ship canal across the Isthmus of Panama, sufficiently to accomplish the organization in Paris of a society, whose object it is to make a careful preliminary study of the enterprise."[34]

As was previously stated, Mr. Holliday had little time to devote to foreign affairs, an attitude common through the entire country. It is only fair to indicate, however, that for an editor of a small daily newspaper in an inland city, Mr. Holliday had as comprehensive a view of foreign affairs as existed at that time. His lack of interest in the Franco-Prussian war only mirrored the public's attitude. His comprehension of the far reaching effects of the settlement of the Alabama claims on international law and his keen insight as to the dangers of the Cuban rebellion mark him as a man of intelligence and clear thinking in the field of world affairs. Although an isolationist, as were most Americans of the time, Mr. Holliday was only one of many in the passing parade that believed in the creed, "America for the Americans."

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[34]Ibid., September 23, 1876.

CHAPTER VIII

RECAPITULATION

The years 1869-1877, which cover the administration of President Grant, were a formative period for the newly established Indianapolis News and against that ever changing backdrop, in the short space of two presidential terms, Mr. Holliday was able to make the influence of his young newspaper felt in Indianapolis and throughout the Hoosier state. From the start the youthful editor remained true to those policies established in his first editorial. His editorials published throughout the administration of President Grant on a mutiplicity of subject matter are proof of his independent thinking as his views found him first in the Republican camp and then again in the Democratic fold. His paper was never neutral, as he had promised it would not be. Although there will be some who will criticize Mr. Holliday for his dogmatic stand on certain subjects no one can assert that The News editor held back once he had entered upon an editorial campaign. It is true that often The News found itself fighting a losing campaign but as Mr. Holliday had stated in his early editorials, if wrong, he would be honestly so.

Considering the communication facilities of the period and the difficulties of publishing a new journal Mr. Holliday accomplished a rather remarkable feat in starting a metropolitan daily with capital of less than fifty dollars. In spite of the fact that he had a limited knowledge of journalism, in terms of today's standards, Mr. Holliday was able to discuss

national as well as local problems with great ease. His interest in local affairs did not cause him to lose sight of the broader national scene and the critical issues which developed during those post-war years.

Mr. Holliday's intense and sincere interest in the issues effecting Indianapolis gained for The News many friends and proved that he placed the interest of the people above all considerations of politics and special interest groups. Changing political complexion of the city government and efforts of influential businessmen did not sway him from his avowed intent, ". . . . to ever be alive to the interest of Indianapolis and to add to her prosperity and the welfare of her citizens."

Although it is difficult to judge the effect of his editorials on the national scene, Mr. Holliday displayed a keen interest in politics and through the years of President Grant's leadership became very critical of his administration and the men who surrounded him. Throughout the period under study The News maintained its attitude of critical interest in the national government and campaigned constantly against corruption, advocated reform, advocated the continuation of the reconstruction program, and assisted in combatting the "third term" movement. The writer believes that the passing of time has proven Mr. Holliday did contribute in some degree to the public's desire for reform on a national level and that his views on reconstruction and the "third term" issue were held in respect by many leaders of the day. That the young editor was correct in his advocacy of " hard money," time also has proven.

Study of Mr. Holliday's attitude on the numerous domestic issues arising during the period also presents a problem of evaluation. However, in the light of events occurring since that time, the writer believes it safe to conclude that Mr. Holliday was wrong in advocating a small navy for

that time, was wrong in seeking a reduction of the diplomatic service, and was wrong in his attitude that the right of women to vote was not essential to the welfare of the nation, and was wrong in seeking to tax educational institutions and churches the same as businesses. In each of these issues, history has taken the opposite course from that advocated by The News.

Following the same line of reasoning, the writer believes that events occurring since President Grant's time have proven that Mr. Holliday was correct in his belief that new territories should not be admitted to the Union without the required population; that a moderate policy of protective tariff was best; that the negro, although legally equal to the white, would not be socially equal for many years and a process of education was necessary for both races before strife between the two would cease; that railroads were taking advantage of the resources of the country; that labor would have to recognize the rights and risks of capital; and that crime, to be prevented, must be punished in full accordance with law.

In the field of foreign relations, Mr. Holliday clearly foresaw the dangers of annexing smaller countries surrounding the United States. He saw the necessity of settling the international aspects of the Alabama affair and the involved question of the rights of neutrals and belligerents during times of war. At that early date, The News was justifiably disturbed by the speculation in some papers concerning the chances of war between Cuba and Spain inflaming the people of the United States into conducting a needless war. Mr. Holliday also was very much interested in the idea of building a canal between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and the necessity of the project being given a great deal of careful thought by the United States. The writer believes that Mr. Holliday's editorials on foreign relations supported the development of a policy that has well served the United States

throughout the years.

In conclusion, it is the firm belief of the writer that by the year 1877, Mr. Holliday's policies, as originally established, had guided The News into a position of influence in Indianapolis, a position that was to insure the success of the new journal throughout the years that followed.

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The Indianapolis News, December 7, 1929.

Newspaper clippings and notes in possession of Mrs. Elizabeth Hitz and Mrs. Lucia Macbeth, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Newspaper clippings in possession of Stephen A. Noland, editor, The Indianapolis News, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Conversations with Hilton U. Brown, treasurer, The Indianapolis News Indianapolis, Indiana. (Mr. Brown was a personal friend and business associate of John H. Holliday.)